

1992-1996 FINDINGS
OF THE
VIETNAM WAR WORKING GROUP

INTRODUCTION

This report is a review of the work completed by the Vietnam War Working Group (VWWG) of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs. It is submitted by the VWWG Chairman from the American side, Congressman Pete Peterson (D-FL), along with the primary U.S. VWWG Commissioners: U.S. Senator Bob Smith (R-NH), U.S. Senator John Kerry (D-MA), Congressman Sam Johnson (R-TX), Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (POW/MIA Affairs) James Wold, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kent Wiedemann.

The Commission began its work in March 1992 by Presidential Order. It was established to investigate information from Russian witnesses and Soviet-era documents on the fate of missing American servicemembers from World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War. During the first months, the Commission defined its goals and developed the structures and strategies to conduct an organized investigation covering a broad range of unresolved POW/MIA issues.

The VWWG was established during the Commission's first plenary session in Moscow on 26 March 1992. At the first meeting, the VWWG identified several specific areas of interest, which included general Soviet knowledge about American POWs during the Vietnam War; reports that Soviet forces downed American aircraft; Soviet access to American POWs in Indochina, and reports that American POWs may have been transferred to the territory of the former Soviet Union. By the Eighth Plenum, held in Washington, D.C., in March 1994, the VWWG had focused on achieving satisfactory answers to four fundamental questions:

1. Did any individual of the Soviet Government or any organization transfer American POWs from Southeast Asia to the former Soviet Union?
2. Did any individual of the Soviet government or any organization have direct or indirect contact with, or information about, American POWs in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War years?

3. What information is available in Russian archives regarding names, numbers, status, fate, and policies in reference to American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia?
4. What information is known to citizens of the former Soviet Union that may improve American understanding and analysis of specific incidents of loss in Southeast Asia?

In the course of its investigation, the Commission has gathered a great deal of information regarding the Soviet role in North Vietnam vis-à-vis American prisoners. This search has primarily included documents from Russian archives as well as interviews with Russian witnesses. Although the four questions of investigation cannot be considered as “closed” or “resolved,” enough information has been gathered to suggest a number of preliminary analytical findings.

In presenting these findings, however, three points must be made about “closure” of the issues before the Vietnam War Working Group:

1. The VWWG was not organized to resolve the broad question of American POWs and MIAs in Southeast Asia -- this challenge remains within the scope of current efforts between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the Laotian People’s Democratic Republic. The VWWG has addressed only those aspects of the POW/MIA question in which the Russians (or former Soviets) were, or might have been, directly or indirectly involved, or to which Russian documents or witnesses could contribute new information.
2. Some issues being examined by the VWWG will always remain open. For example, we continue to identify and interview many Russian witnesses to events in Vietnam, and as long as legitimate questions remain concerning the fate of unaccounted for U.S. servicemembers in Southeast Asia, such interviews must be continued. The working group also cannot preclude the possibility of finding new and important Soviet documents, either in archival holdings not yet searched or materials not yet declassified.
3. To begin answering the questions under investigation, the working group has undertaken the process of writing a preliminary history of narrow issues associated with the Vietnam War. The focus has remained on the substance of the questions under investigation, with an emphasis on acquiring fact

and testimony and subjecting them to close examination and analysis. As the working group develops findings and results, the information will first be provided to the families of U.S. personnel still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War and then to the public at large. The information will also be made available to historians and academicians. It is hoped that these historians and academicians will accept the challenge of analyzing and understanding the true Soviet-Vietnamese-American dynamics during the Vietnam War.

This introduction includes remarks on the nature of the relationship between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam during the war based on materials and interviews reviewed by the VWWG. It is followed by the executive summary, which is designed to be a concise overview of the analytical findings regarding each of the four lines of inquiry.

The executive summary is followed by four analytical essays, each of which examines one issue in detail with supporting arguments and evidence. Lastly, the report includes four appendices for reference:

Appendix A: Summaries of the work done by the VWWG at plenary sessions.

Appendix B: Descriptions of documents on Vietnam provided by the Russians.

Appendix C: Interview summaries conducted with Russian witnesses related to Southeast Asia.

Although this paper ventures into the study and analysis of historical events, it is not intended to be strictly a historical work. The findings of the VWWG are intended first and foremost to serve the interests of the families of missing American servicemembers in Southeast Asia who deserve the best possible answers to questions regarding missing servicemembers in Southeast Asia. Secondly, this work seeks to serve the American and Russian publics, who not only long for factually accurate information, but can benefit from the trust and partnership developed between our countries as a result of humanitarian efforts such as this.

The members of the VWWG wish to acknowledge and thank the many witnesses from Russia and the former Soviet Union who stepped forward to provide their best recollections and experiences, photographs, and diaries. Some had to fight through painful memories and veils of secrecy to share their

recollections of the past. Their contributions are heroic and invaluable. The results of their effort are the bonds of trust and understanding that have developed between Russian and American participants in the Commission.

THE SOVIET-NORTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONSHIP

The Vietnam War Working Group cannot conduct a complete analysis of the four questions under investigation without briefly examining the historical context in which certain incidents occurred and certain circumstances existed. More specifically, the first two lines of investigation—the possibility that Soviet officials had either direct or indirect contact with, or transported, American prisoners to the former Soviet Union—must be examined with the nature of the relationship between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam taken into consideration. This line of inquiry is especially important because the Department of Defense has stated that none of the captured American servicemembers who were released by North Vietnam in 1973 reported any contact with Soviet personnel. Therefore, if there was Soviet contact with captured American servicemembers, it is most likely to have involved individuals who are still listed as unaccounted for by the U.S. Government.

If Soviet officials had direct or indirect contact with American POWs and were able to transport some of the POWs to the Soviet Union, the following conditions most likely existed:

- A political decision to do so on the part of the leadership of the Soviet Union.
- A political decision to allow this to occur on the part of the leadership of North Vietnam.
- A political agreement between the two countries on when and how this activity was to occur.
- Good working relations between military or security services of both sides.
- The conditions to perform such work in absolute secrecy.

Among many sectors of the U.S. Government and the American public, the Soviet-North Vietnamese relationship was viewed as one of “superior” (Soviet Union) and “surrogate” (North Vietnam). This relationship has been characterized by perceptions that the Soviet Union “pulled the strings” during the Vietnam War, freely pursuing its own self-interests at every turn. After all, the

Soviets provided most of the equipment and supplies with which North Vietnam waged the war, and it seems logical that Moscow extracted a price in return.

However, a review of Russian documents, interviews with former Soviet servicemen, and an analysis of academic literature from both Russian and American sources, suggest that the working level Soviet-Vietnamese war-time relationship was not as amicable and thriving as perceived.

We do not propose to review the entire relationship between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam. This task is better accomplished by prominent experts on the subject. However, we draw on the following conclusions in order to analyze properly all evidence regarding possible Soviet actions vis-à-vis American POWs in Southeast Asia.

1. The Soviet Union was a reluctant partner of North Vietnam: Evidence suggests that the Soviet Union pursued a significant role with North Vietnam because of a direct need to compete with China, which maintained an adversarial position with the Soviet Union over major ideological differences. There is little evidence that the Soviet Union had specific security interests to protect by allying itself with North Vietnam other than the need to support “international communism” and a desire to maintain a prominent position in Southeast Asia in the face of emerging Chinese influence in the region.
2. North Vietnam perceived no obligation to the Soviet Union: North Vietnam considered the war to liberate South Vietnam as a singular objective that all fellow socialist nations were obligated to support. North Vietnam took assistance from both China and the Soviet Union to pursue its aims despite the apparent ideological rifts in the socialist camp. North Vietnam did not feel obligated to reciprocate, and there is little evidence to support the idea that the Soviet Union “got what it wanted” because it provided aid. In fact, many declassified Soviet documents and testimonials from Russian witnesses attest to the “unappreciative” and “arrogant” attitude taken by the North Vietnamese. In return, the North Vietnamese viewed the Soviet military as “arrogant” and “acting superior” and were suspicious of Soviet efforts to improve relations with the United States.

3. The Soviet Union exercised little influence and no control over North Vietnam: The North Vietnamese acted independently in making most strategic and tactical decisions during the war. The North Vietnamese appealed to the Soviet Union for various types of assistance and for international propaganda and political support. However, little evidence has surfaced to indicate that the North Vietnamese coordinated decisions and strategies with the Soviet Union. The history of the Soviet-North Vietnamese relationship is replete with examples of unsuccessful Soviet efforts to influence the North Vietnamese in decisions such as peace negotiations.
4. The Soviets and North Vietnamese were suspicious of each other: The “1205” and “735” documents demonstrate the degree to which the Soviets found it necessary to “acquire insight” into the plans and intentions of the North Vietnamese [both documents (see Appendix A, 136-1 to 136-4, and 179-3 to 179-5) were intelligence acquisitions by Soviet Military Intelligence (the GRU) during the period 1971-1972]. There is also evidence of a North Vietnamese “housecleaning” in 1968, whereby all Vietnamese citizens who were schooled in the Soviet Union were scrutinized for possible allegiance to Moscow as either spies or agents of political influence. Such suspicions and xenophobia seem to have dominated many senior-level relationships. There is also substantial evidence below the surface of their formal relationship on the operational level, that mutual distrust existed between the Soviets and North Vietnamese based on conflicting values and cultures.
5. Working relationships were functional and productive: Despite the political, cultural, and attitudinal problems that dominated the Soviet-North Vietnamese dialogue at senior levels, the working relationships between soldiers and security service members of both countries were reportedly productive. Some witnesses describe cordial, working relationships that included the exchange of information and freedom of movement beyond what was technically “allowed.” The Soviet Union clearly had many opportunities to gather intelligence on American forces to test their emerging military technologies against American targets, and to acquire captured American equipment and documents for exploitation. Some of these activities were conducted under agreements between the two sides, while other activities were undertaken clearly at the Soviet initiative.

In summary, the evidence reviewed by the VWWG suggests that the relationship between North Vietnam and the Soviet Union was unfavorable for the transfer of American POWs to the Soviet Union, at least on a large scale. However, although the evidence also suggests that the North Vietnamese believed the POWs to be “their” prisoners captured during “their” war, there is evidence that conditions existed for Soviet involvement, perhaps indirectly, with the interrogation of American POWs in Southeast Asia. The historical record suggests that the North Vietnamese also considered the political, propaganda, and hostage value of the prisoners to far outweigh the benefits of exploitation of technical knowledge. With these facts in mind, the search conducted by the VWWG has been for evidence of Soviet activities (vis-à-vis American POWs) conducted in limited times and circumstances, perhaps even isolated incidents, under extreme secrecy, and possibly even without the knowledge of the North Vietnamese.

The VWWG has concentrated its efforts to date on pursuing those sources of information judged most likely to offer insights about American POWs in Southeast Asia. Consistent with this approach, considerable attention has been directed at such topics as the role of Soviet journalists and their writings as well as the participation of Soviet officials in international monitoring organizations. In the same vein, the working group has designed its interview program and research initiatives in a manner that encourages continuous and widespread contact with Soviet-era military personnel as well as officials from the security and intelligence services and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose functional responsibilities were likely to have generated interest in and knowledge of American POW/MIAs.

To this initial listing of sources, the VWWG has added still others, which are expected to expand the scope of information available for future research activity. One such source involves Soviet-era professional publications depicting, among other things, contacts that may have occurred between Soviet journalists and observers and American POWs in places and at times not previously known to the U.S. Government. Indeed, the VWWG is currently pursuing specific leads pertaining to an account of a meeting between Soviet media representatives in Laos and an American POW who remains unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regarding the four major questions before the Vietnam War Working Group of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, the following observations have been made based on information gathered to date (May 1996).

Question 1: Did any individual of the Soviet government or organization transport American POWs from Southeast Asia to the former Soviet Union?

Preliminary Finding. A four-year investigation into the activities of Soviet officials in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War has found no first-hand, substantiated evidence that American prisoners of war were taken from Southeast Asia to the former Soviet Union. However, the VWWG continues to investigate other information that suggests that such transfers may have taken place.

In the continuing examination of this issue, the U.S. side believes that the need for additional interviews with former State Security (KGB) Officers, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Officers, and Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff (GRU) Officers, is of the highest priority. Though there is no substantial evidence that the Russians are concealing the transfer of American prisoners, such interviews provide important insight on what did and did not occur in North Vietnam concerning the American POW issue. Given that the KGB is the subject of most accusations regarding American POWs in Southeast Asia, it would be beneficial if additional testimony could be gathered from both KGB and GRU officers who served in Southeast Asia during the war.

The question of the transfer of U.S. POWs to the former Soviet Union will remain at the top of the list of every interview and line of investigation. Every interview improves our understanding of the Soviet position vis-à-vis American prisoners. With the investigation of every lead or allegation, we learn even more, not only about what did occur, but also about what did not occur.

Though this issue has not been investigated to a definitive conclusion, a great deal of positive work has been done to clarify the Soviet role in Southeast Asia. In a historical context, however, the lack of first-hand, substantiated evidence of transfer immediately suggests other questions, such as, "If not, why not?" Soviet policies during the Cold War suggest at least a predisposition by Soviet

authorities to want to transfer American POWs to Soviet soil for further exploitation or recruitment purposes. For example, the U.S. side of the Commission has concluded that many American POWs, including some whose fate is still unknown, were directly interrogated by Soviet personnel during the Korean War. Moreover, there is a high probability that some of these Americans may have been sent to the USSR during the early 1950s. With respect to the Vietnam War, the VWWG has confirmed the existence of a broad and aggressive Soviet-run program to transfer to the USSR American military equipment from land, naval, and air forces. This effort exceeded 700 pieces of U.S. equipment by March 1967 and included an intact capsule from an F-111A shot down over North Vietnam in 1972. Past experience with Soviet intelligence services suggests that the KGB and GRU would not have knowingly passed up opportunities to transfer American prisoners to the USSR for further exploitation regarding captured equipment and other military information, as well as for recruitment purposes. However, to date, there is no first-hand, substantiated evidence proving this allegation.

Question 2: What involvement, to include direct or indirect contact, did the Soviets have with U.S. POWs in Southeast Asia?

Preliminary Finding. A four-year investigation into the activities of Soviet officials in North Vietnam during the years of the Vietnam War has shown that the Soviets conducted in-depth, intensive, and focused intelligence gathering against the American target in Vietnam.

The VWWG has also confirmed one face-to-face meeting in January 1973, between a KGB officer and an American CIA agent who was captured in North Vietnam in 1968 and released with other American POWs during Operation Homecoming in March 1973. In 1992, the CIA, the Vietnamese Government, and the Russian Government all publicly acknowledged that this contact took place. In addition to the above-referenced encounter, there is limited evidence before the VWWG that other American personnel captured during the Vietnam War may have been directly interrogated by Soviet personnel. The VWWG continues to investigate this and other reports. Finally, there is a growing amount of evidence that Soviet personnel were indirectly involved with the interrogations of some American POWs by their North Vietnamese counterparts through the preparation of technical questions and the subsequent evaluation of interrogation results. The VWWG is continuing to pursue

this question to determine if there is any information from Russian sources that could shed light on the fate of unaccounted for U.S. personnel.

In the continuing examination of this issue, the U.S. side has been guided by the views of the late Chairman of the Russian side of the Commission, General-Colonel Dmitri Volkogonov. In testimony before the U.S. Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs in November 1992, General-Colonel Volkogonov stated, in reference to Soviet participation in interrogations in Vietnam, that “it is possible, because in Korea, our special services did interrogate American pilots, so by logic it is possible that the same was done in Vietnam.” The U.S. side believes that additional testimony from former KGB, MFA, and GRU officers is necessary as well as additional archival research.

The VWWG has also received important leads from the Russian side that may clarify the degree of Soviet involvement in interrogations of American POWs. The VWWG is continuing to pursue this line of inquiry to determine whether interrogation records might exist in the archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense, the GRU, or the KGB. The Commission is also continuing to seek interviews with former Soviet Vietnam War veterans and other former Soviet personnel who may have relevant recollections. Though this issue has not been investigated to a definitive conclusion, a great deal of positive work has been done to clarify past assumptions about the Soviet role in North Vietnam (see appendices).

Question 3: What information is available in Russian archives regarding names, numbers, status, fate, and policies regarding repatriation of American POWs in Southeast Asia?

Preliminary Finding. The VWWG has received important GRU information concerning alleged wartime reports by Vietnamese officials on numbers, names, and policies regarding American POWs in Southeast Asia. The working group has also received from the archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense limited information concerning specific loss incidents involving American personnel during the Vietnam War. On balance, however, access to Russian archival holdings has been sporadic and unpredictable, stopping far short of the thorough, systematic review that the U.S. side anticipated

would be the bedrock of its research program. Efforts to improve this situation are among the highest priorities of the Commission and the VWWG.

The VWWG has reviewed two important documents from the Russian GRU which purport to be transcripts of wartime reports by North Vietnamese officials in which the number of American POWs captured and held in North Vietnam during the war was referenced. In the first document, dated 1971, a North Vietnamese official states that 735 American POWs are being held. In the second document, dated 1972, another North Vietnamese official states that 1,205 American POWs are being held. Both numbers are significantly higher than the 591 American POWs who were actually released by Vietnam in 1973. While both documents have been dismissed as fabrications by the Government of Vietnam, Russian officials maintain that both documents are authentic.

There is debate within the U.S. side of the Commission as to whether the numbers cited in these reports are plausible¹. The U.S. Government has concluded that there probably is more information in Vietnamese party and military archives that could shed light on these documents, but to date, such information has not been provided by the Vietnamese Government. The VWWG continues to seek additional information from Russian sources to assist with its investigation into these documents, to include access to the Soviet-Vietnamese translators who initially acquired and evaluated these reports, as well as access to relevant archival reports. Moreover, the VWWG notes that GRU officials have informed Ambassador Toon that additional information concerning the method by which these two documents were acquired does exist, but this information cannot be disclosed because it involves intelligence collection capabilities. Nonetheless, the relevant information contained in both the 1205 and 735 documents (see Appendix A, TFR 136-1 and TFR 179-3) has been passed to appropriate U.S. officials already engaged in discussions with Vietnamese officials on POW/MIA issues. In Shcherbakov's (Soviet Ambassador to North Vietnam during the war) messages, the former Ambassador complained of a lack of assistance by the North Vietnamese in providing access to equipment and crash sites, but the Ambassador stated nothing about prisoners of war. The material

¹ A coordinated, interagency intelligence analysis released by the Department of Defense on 24 January 1994 casts doubt on the accuracy of the numbers in the Russian documents. Another analysis, by U.S. Senator Bob Smith, released on 21 July 1993, lends credibility to the documents.

from the GRU 7-volume study included detailed information on tactics, approaches, and air battles, but only anecdotal information on the fates of the pilots of downed American aircraft. The GRU subsequently provided a written statement dated June 1994, asserting that the “primary” reporting material on which the 7-volume study was based was destroyed during an internal file review conducted in 1975. In most major documents provided by the Russian side of the Commission, data on American prisoners was tangential. Russian witnesses reported acquiring the information to help Soviet research and development better counter American aircraft, to develop better Soviet systems, and to assist the North Vietnamese in defending against American air attacks. Information about the fate of pilots was tangential and anecdotal in the reports sent to Moscow. More importantly, the documents provided by the Russian side to date have not given information about any specific American POWs who were not previously listed by the U.S. Government as having been captured.

The search for Soviet documents that contain definitive information on American prisoners is not over. We shall continue to utilize available archives, both Russian and American. However, due to the complexity of archival document filing, the task is enormous. It is impossible to search every folder of every archive. It is also very difficult to declassify every secret holding that may have information germane to our work. The works of scholars, historians, archivists, or others may yet yield new and illuminating documents, and the effects of time on classified information may also yield interesting results. It remains clear that there is more information in Soviet archives that bears on the questions being examined, especially the archives of the KGB, GRU, MFA, and International Department of the Communist Party. Although Russian members of the Commission have asserted that these classified archives are not known to contain additional information about American POWs or MIAs from the Vietnam War, the U.S. side has reason to believe otherwise. Therefore, the U.S. side of the Commission is continuing its effort to ensure that Russian archives are thoroughly checked for relevant information.

Question 4: What information is known to citizens of the former Soviet Union that may improve American understanding and analysis of specific incidents of loss in Southeast Asia?

Preliminary Finding. Information from citizens of the former Soviet Union has substantially added to American understanding of certain events surrounding specific incidents of loss in Southeast Asia.

Both sides of the Commission fully expect that work in this area will continue until the U.S. Government has established that the fullest possible accounting of Americans missing in Southeast Asia has been completed. Though it is impossible to expect that the Commission can interview every former Soviet veteran of the war in Southeast Asia, there remain potentially hundreds of witnesses who must be identified and interviewed. Efforts continue by working with veterans organizations, using print media to elicit information, and acquiring leads from relevant documents. Success is measured by the resolution of cases for the families of missing servicemembers. Therefore, this line of investigation continues to hold critical potential for achieving results that reflect the highest aims of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission.

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 1

Question 1: Did any individual of the Soviet government or any organization transfer American POWs from Southeast Asia to the former Soviet Union?

Discussion. No aspect of the work of the Commission has been more pressing and emotional than the possibility that American POWs were taken from Southeast Asia and sent to the Soviet Union for exploitation. This possibility has been the subject of hearsay for years.

Within weeks after the efforts of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission began in 1992, there were rumors that American POWs were moved to the Soviet Union. This process has left some family members, POW/MIA activists, journalists, and members of the general public with the overall perception that the Soviets “might have” taken our prisoners from Southeast Asia. In reflecting these concerns, the U.S. side of the Commission has made this the most urgent question for investigation by the VWWG. The results of our joint investigations to date are presented below.

Analysis and Preliminary Finding. A four-year investigation into the activities of Soviet officials in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War has yielded no first-hand, substantiated evidence to date that American POWs were taken from Southeast Asia to the former USSR. However, the working group continues to investigate other information which suggests that such transfers may have taken place.

The investigation of this issue to date has been based on the assumption that transfers did occur or might have occurred, and the search for documents and witnesses was intended to find evidence of such transfers. The investigation began with the development of a thesis that represents a list of the conditions which should have existed if transfers of POWs had occurred:

1. The Soviets had a strong interest in recruiting Americans as intelligence agents, learning about sophisticated American technology (ARM/HARM, Ravens, electronic countermeasures, etc.) and acquiring information for propaganda purposes.

2. The Soviet leadership, having weighed the potential gains against the potential risks, chose to take American prisoners from Southeast Asia to the former Soviet Union.
3. The Soviets used their access to the North Vietnamese military and intelligence circles to gather information to assess the intelligence/propaganda potential of each American POW.
4. The Soviets used their influence as an “elder ally” and chose the prisoners they wanted, took them, and moved them to the former Soviet Union.
5. The sensitive nature of such an undertaking required absolute secrecy, and could only be executed by the KGB or GRU as directed by their superiors in Moscow. The operations to conduct transfers would have had one of following characteristics: a) The transfer of one, or a small number, of POWs at unique times because of circumstances or opportunities, or, b) The transfer of a small number of POWs in a “steady stream” as part of an ongoing program.

This thesis suggested lines of investigation based on the many critical points at which evidence of the above activities should have been detected:

1. The degree of interest in American POWs by the institutions of Soviet authority would have been reflected in communication sent from Moscow to Hanoi and would be well-known to Soviet officials who served in Vietnam.
2. The decision to transport prisoners to the Soviet Union would have been reflected in classified holdings of the Politburo and other sensitive documents reflecting the “inner workings” of the Soviet leadership. By the 1960s and 1970s, the KGB, GRU, and other organizations of Soviet authority did not undertake such highly sensitive activities without the appropriate high-level political decision that directed or sanctioned such activity.
3. Evidence of Soviet questioning and efforts to assess information would have been discernible in the debriefings of returned American POWs. Given that Soviet interest was likely to have been strategic (knowledge of high technology, nuclear, and space programs), the POWs who possessed such information would have been the first priority for Soviet exploitation. Soviet personnel

stationed in Southeast Asia would have participated in the process of assessing Americans, and their records would have reflected this work.

4. Had prisoners actually been taken and moved to the Soviet Union, the trail of witnesses and documents would have been extensive. Vietnamese records would have reflected the loss of prisoners to their allies. Secret discussions between Soviet and North Vietnamese foreign affairs and communist party officials would have recorded the agreement upon which such actions were undertaken. Beyond the potential document records, the following categories of witnesses should have known of such incidents:

- a) The North Vietnamese who allowed prisoners to be assessed.
- b) The North Vietnamese who transferred the prisoners to Soviet custody.
- c) The Soviets who assessed the prisoners.
- d) The Soviets who took custody of the prisoners.
- e) The Soviets who transported the prisoners to the Soviet Union.
- f) The Soviets who took custody of the prisoners in the Soviet Union.
- g) The Soviet security service personnel who exploited the prisoners.
- h) The Soviet analysts who benefited from the intelligence gathered.
- i) The Soviet personnel who incarcerated or otherwise managed the short or long term “disposition” of the prisoners after exploitation.

The above thesis, as well as the assumptions that underlie it, have been investigated by the Commission for more than four years. The investigation is not complete, although in many areas sufficient information has been gathered to formulate preliminary conclusions.

To date, however, every line of investigation has been explored thoroughly, and the search has not been limited to Russian archives and witnesses. The American side of the Commission sought

information from a variety of sources to confirm or deny this thesis. The scope of the investigation included the following:

Russian witnesses. We have pursued and interviewed members of the MFA, KGB, GRU, Soviet military, and Communist Party officials who served in, or visited Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War.

Russian documents. We have sought records attesting to MFA, KGB, GRU, Soviet military, and Communist Party communication, records, reports, and policy decisions regarding Soviet involvement as allies, advisors, and participants in the Vietnam War.

American intelligence. We have sought information from the broad array of American intelligence efforts against the Soviet Union during the years of the Cold War in search of evidence of Soviet transfer of American prisoners.

Former POWs. We have reviewed information from the debriefs of American POWs held in Southeast Asia for evidence of Soviet involvement with American prisoners.

The results of the investigation to date are summarized below:

Regarding the official Russian version of events. The American side of the Commission has been told in definitive terms that the Soviet Government did not at any time transport American POWs from Southeast Asia to the territory of the Soviet Union. These statements have been made by the Directors, past and present, of the External Intelligence Service (former-KGB), the Directors of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet General Staff (GRU), and other high ranking Cabinet-level members of the Russian Government. As the Russian co-Chairman of the Commission, General-Colonel Volkogonov, stated early in the investigation that he could not discount the possibility that transfers from Vietnam occurred. After extensive reviews of Russian archival holdings, however, he stated that he had seen no evidence that transfers occurred.

Regarding Russian witnesses. The American side of the commission has interviewed more than 200 Soviets who served in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War. They varied in rank from Senior Lieutenant (none below) to Colonel (vast majority) and Senior General Officers and

an Ambassador. They represented varied interests: MFA Officers including an ambassador and a member of the CPSU International Department, a physician, a Tass correspondent, two attaches who have been separately identified as being GRU officers, and various Soviet service members. Some were interviewed in the company of Russian counterparts in Russia; others were interviewed in third countries without Russian participation. Every witness, without exception, stated that he had not known or heard of any operation to transport American prisoners to the Soviet Union. Many of the witnesses questioned the possible motives of such a transfer and opined that American perceptions about Russian potential gains versus the tremendous political risk of such operations, were simply wrong. They could not imagine any information known to a prisoner that would be worth the risk of endangering Soviet-American relations. Several of the witnesses served in very senior positions in North Vietnam, such as commanders of Soviet technicians in Vietnam, one ambassador, and attaches. Each of the senior personnel claim that their duty positions were so well-placed that if transfers of POWs had occurred, they would have known about it.

Another analytical conclusion drawn from the interviews conducted to date is that the Soviet-North Vietnamese relationship was considerably less amicable than previously believed by U.S. analysts. At one time, the premise that POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union was based on a perception of Soviet impunity in North Vietnam. It was assumed that the Soviets could take prisoners if they desired, given their ostensible status as a “senior ally.” The scenario characterized by the Soviet witnesses, however, is that of a tense, formal, and sometimes cold relationship with their North Vietnamese counterparts. Most military officers described the environment as “restricted” and “controlled,” and even the most senior officers could travel around North Vietnam only with permission and a North Vietnamese escort. Many senior Soviet military officers privately criticized the fact that the North Vietnamese seemed very “unappreciative” of the military assistance provided by the Soviet Union. These Soviet officers resented the fact that the North Vietnamese restricted Soviet access to crash sites, military equipment, and other sources of valuable technical intelligence. Most described the Chinese as having had a more advantageous relationship with the North Vietnamese. The ideological

conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s between the Soviet Union and China were reflected in the dynamics of the Soviet-North Vietnamese relationship.

The American side has interviewed several former KGB officers who served in Vietnam. One of the officers claimed that the KGB had nothing to do with American prisoners, and he did not believe that the Soviet Union had any information to suggest that the North Vietnamese held prisoners back after Operation Homecoming. On 11 August 1992, the commission met with an SVR representative from the Public Affairs and Press Bureau and asked to meet with KGB veterans of the war. Mr. Kobaladze stated that, of the names provided to Russian officials as having been former KGB officers who served in Vietnam during the war, four were dead, four could not be located, one could not be identified, and six were identified as KGB officers who in fact, served in Vietnam. All of the latter six apparently denied having any knowledge of American POWs. The U.S. side of the Commission continues to seek such witness testimonials because they would be very insightful regarding the Soviet “mindset” regarding prisoners. Was the KGB denied access? Did the KGB attempt to get access? The U.S. side of the Commission has been privately told that some of the former KGB officers are reluctant to appear before the Commission because they presently conduct legitimate business with Vietnam and do not wish to be affiliated with their former employer. This information remains difficult to verify. Though the U.S. side believes that further interviews with former KGB officers from Southeast Asia are important, there has been no substantiated evidence to suggest that the KGB is concealing knowledge of the transfer of American prisoners.

Regarding Russian documents. Among the documents formally passed to the U.S. side of the Commission by the Russian side (see Appendix A), there is no information, direct or indirect, on the transfer of American prisoners from Southeast Asia to the Soviet Union.

However, the documents are replete with references to information that supports the statements of the witnesses that relations with the North Vietnamese were difficult and restricted. Documents have been received from MFA journals, MFA communications with Moscow, military assessments, and Soviet intelligence analysis. All of the documents reflect the frequent problems of lack of North Vietnamese cooperation, restricted access, lack of reciprocity in executing formal relationships and

agreements, and obstruction. Several documents include complaints about the Chinese having had better and faster access to crash sites and information. The documents available to date support the assertion that the Soviets did not have the authority and position of superiority in North Vietnam that many had assumed.

From American intelligence holdings. A preliminary search was conducted in the holdings of the U.S. Intelligence Community for evidence, information, even credible rumors or suggestions of Soviet complicity in transferring American prisoners to the former USSR. It is inappropriate in this forum to discuss the specifics of the search.

The conclusion of this preliminary review is: American intelligence records contain limited information suggesting that the Soviets transferred American POWs to the Soviet Union.

The completeness and accuracy of American intelligence insight into the Soviet Union during the Cold War has often been questioned. For this issue, however, the analysis takes into account that although American intelligence certainly did not know everything about the inner workings of the Soviet military, political and security apparatus, the U.S. Intelligence Community has, over the years, been able to establish at least the basic traces of Soviet involvement in covert operations, terrorism, communist front organizations, espionage, disinformation, and other forms of clandestine foreign policy. The VWWG is continuing to pursue additional information from American intelligence records with the above perspective in mind.

From former American POWs in Vietnam. A review of analytical work done on information from returning POWs has failed to support the assertion that the Soviets transferred prisoners to the former Soviet Union. During the debriefings of the nearly 600 returned POWs, none reported information suggesting that American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union.

Conclusions. In attempting to establish the validity of the thesis that the Soviets transferred American POWs to the former Soviet Union, the evidence gathered to date suggests that:

1. There is evidence that the Soviets were interested in the information of American POWs.
2. There is no evidence that the political decision to undertake transfer operations existed.

3. There is evidence that the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship was complicated, restricted, and cumbersome.
4. There is no first-hand, substantiated evidence that transfers of American POWs to the Soviet Union occurred, either in unique singular occurrences, or as part of a steady program.

Prospects. For the future, the U.S. side of the Commission continues to believe that interviews with former KGB officers, MFA officers, and GRU officers are important (by contrast, the American side of the Commission has interviewed an ample number of military veterans of service in Southeast Asia on this issue). Though there is no substantiated evidence that the Russians are concealing the transfer of American prisoners, such interviews provide the best insight on what did, and did not, occur in Southeast Asia concerning American POWs. The MFA and GRU efforts in Southeast Asia are at least partially accounted for in documents and several witness testimonials. Examination of this issue would be greatly aided by a review of KGB policies, interests, and activities in Southeast Asia during the war, but such a review would probably have to wait until the records can be declassified for historical examination. In the meantime, it is hoped that the Commission may yet interview other KGB officers who served in Southeast Asia during the war years to answer the key questions being examined by the Commission.

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 2

Question 2: Did any individual of the Soviet Government or any organization have direct or indirect contact with, or information about, American POWs in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War?

Discussion. The question of direct Soviet contact with American POWs is closely related to the issue of transfer. The two questions share the following common characteristics of the underlying motives and circumstances: the presumed superior relationship of the Soviets with the North Vietnamese, and the expectation that the Soviets had a high degree of interest in the information known by American POWs.

The Soviet military and security services have cited three potential areas of interest for exploitation of foreign prisoners in the conflicts in which the Soviet Union has been involved since 1945: recruitment of spies among prisoners to be repatriated, acquisition of potential technical and military information from knowledgeable prisoners, and gathering information for propaganda. Ample evidence of all three types of activity by the Soviets has been documented from the post-World War II period and the Korean War.

The truth about direct contact with POWs is just as clouded as the issue of transfer. Many people assume that the Soviets “probably” participated in the interrogation of American prisoners. Many have pointed to the fact that some American prisoners in Hanoi had knowledge of the American nuclear program, high technology aviation, even the U.S. space program, and to many, it remains inconceivable that the “senior” ally did not take full advantage of the opportunity to exploit this information.

Analysis and Preliminary Finding. A four-year investigation into the activities of Soviet officials in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War has shown that the Soviets conducted in-depth, intensive, and focused intelligence gathering against the American target in Vietnam.

As with the issue of transfers, investigation of this issue to date has been based on the assumption that direct contacts did occur or might have occurred, and the search for documents and

witnesses was intended to find evidence of such contact. As with the subject of transfers, the investigation began with the development of a thesis that represented the likely conditions under which the Soviets had contact with American prisoners. The thesis stated:

1. The Soviets had a strong interest in recruiting Americans as intelligence agents, learning about sophisticated American technology, and acquiring information for propaganda purposes.
2. The Soviet leadership, having weighed the importance of access to American prisoners, and having felt entitled to compliance by the North Vietnamese to whom they provided military and technical assistance, made the political decision to access American prisoners for intelligence information.
3. The Soviets used their access to North Vietnamese military and intelligence circles to gather information on the technical knowledge of each American prisoner of war.
4. The Soviets used their influence as an “elder” ally and selected the prisoners who were suitable for questioning consistent with Soviet intelligence objectives and interrogated and debriefed them.
5. Such operations could only have been undertaken by the KGB or GRU as directed by their superiors in Moscow. Had such contacts been productive, it would have been reflected in Soviet research and development efforts, where information gathered from American prisoners would have been incorporated for the improvement of Soviet systems and equipment.

This thesis suggested lines of investigation based on the many critical points at which evidence of the above activities should have been detected:

1. The degree of interest in American prisoners of war by the institutions of Soviet authority would have been reflected in communication sent from Moscow to Hanoi and would be well known to Soviet military and intelligence officials who served in Vietnam.
2. The decision to have contact with American prisoners may well have been made without Central Committee or Politburo approval because the sensitivity of such activity was substantially lower. After all, the Soviets served in North Vietnam openly and at the invitation of the North Vietnamese. Such decisions, however, would still be reflected in KGB and GRU policy and communication

records, because it was unlikely that the KGB or GRU personnel in North Vietnam would have conducted such activities without the prior approval of Moscow central authority.

3. Evidence of Soviet questioning and efforts to assess technical knowledge would have been brought out in the debriefings of returned American prisoners. Given the generally unsophisticated methods of interrogation practiced by the North Vietnamese, technically accurate and focused questioning on subjects of strategic importance would have been noted by American prisoners of war who underwent interrogation.
4. Had prisoners actually been contacted directly by Soviet officials, the following witnesses and documents would have remained to attest to this activity:
 - a) The Soviets who acquired, forwarded, and evaluated the assessments of the prisoners.
 - b) The Soviets who interrogated or debriefed the prisoners.
 - c) The Soviets who wrote, communicated, evaluated, or disseminated the intelligence information gathered from the prisoners.
 - d) The Soviets who read the intelligence products, and the scientists, engineers, tacticians, and others who were charged with evaluating and incorporating the data.
 - e) Documentary evidence should exist to substantiate every step of the above process.

The above thesis, as well as the assumptions that underlie it, have been investigated by the Commission for more than four years. The investigation is not complete, although in many areas, sufficient information has been gathered to formulate preliminary conclusions. The scope of the investigation included the following:

Russian witnesses. The Commission has sought and interviewed members of the MFA, KGB, GRU, Soviet military, and Communist Party officials who served in or visited North Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

Russian documents. The Commission has sought records attesting to MFA, KGB, GRU, Soviet military, and Communist Party communication, records, reports, and policy decisions regarding Soviet involvement as allies, advisors, and participants in the Vietnam War.

American intelligence. The Commission has sought information from the broad array of American intelligence efforts against the Soviet Union during the years of the Cold War indicating Soviet participation in the interrogation or other exploitation of American prisoners.

Former POWs. The Commission has reviewed the experiences of American POWs held in North Vietnam for evidence of Soviet involvement in the interrogation, exploitation, or attempts to recruit American prisoners of war.

The results of the investigation to date are summarized below:

Regarding the official Russian version of events. The American side of the Commission has been told in definitive terms that the Soviet Government did not at any time have direct contact with American prisoners of war held in Southeast Asia. The Soviet Government allowed, however, for the possibility that overzealous Soviet officers may have tried to approach American prisoners unofficially, in contravention of their orders, when they saw prisoners in locations other than prison camps (two known occurrences include in a hospital and in a village immediately after the prisoner's capture; during these incidents, only casual contact occurred and no interrogation or formal exploitation was reported). The Russians have readily provided information to substantiate an occurrence in 1973 when a Soviet KGB officer interrogated an ostensible CIA asset in North Vietnam. The Russians have formally told the U.S. side of the Commission of the three possible objectives for the Soviets vis-à-vis American POWs: recruitment, exploitation of technical knowledge, and propaganda. The Deputy Archivist of the Russian Federation, Dr. Vladimir Kozlov, who reviewed many Soviet archives of the Vietnam War era, stated that in Soviet policy circles, the propaganda objective prevailed to the exclusion of the other two. This position has been supported by formal statements from Directors (past and present) of the External Intelligence Service (former-KGB), the Directors (past and present) of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet General Staff (GRU), and other high ranking Cabinet-level members of the Russian Government. As the Russian co-Chairman of the Commission, General-Colonel Volkogonov stated

during the early stages of the investigation that he could not discount the possibility that KGB or GRU officers were involved with American prisoners in North Vietnam. After an extensive review of Russian archival holdings, though, he stated that he had seen no evidence of such contacts.

Regarding Russian witnesses. The American side of the Commission has interviewed more than 100 Soviets who served in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War. They varied in rank from Senior Lieutenant (none below) to Colonel (vast majority) to General Officers and an Ambassador. They represented varied interests: 4 MFA officers, including an ambassador, a member of the CPSU International Department, a physician, a Tass correspondent, two attaches who have been separately identified as being GRU officers, and 42 former Soviet service members. Some were interviewed in the company of Russian counterparts in Russia; others were interviewed in third countries without Russian participation. Every witness, without exception, stated that he had no knowledge of Soviet officials directly interrogating American POWs for intelligence or non-intelligence purposes. Many of the witnesses clearly stated that the North Vietnamese Government and military proscribed the Soviets from being at all involved with U.S. POWs. Some stated that the Soviets clearly wanted to, but absolutely could not, get information directly from U.S. POWs. At least several of the witnesses served in very senior positions in North Vietnam: two commanders of all Soviet technicians in Vietnam, one ambassador, and two attaches. Each of the senior personnel stated and supported the argument that their duty positions were so well-placed that, if POWs had been contacted or exploited by Soviet officials, they would have known about it.

Again, pursuit of information on this issue has led to the conclusion that the Soviet-North Vietnamese relationship during the Vietnam War was considerably worse than previously believed by U.S. analysts. At one time, the premise that POWs were interrogated by the Soviets was based on a perception of Soviet “superiority” in North Vietnam. It was assumed that the Soviets could simply ask for, or demand, access to one or more prisoners as a “senior ally.” The scenario characterized by the Soviet witnesses, however, is that of a tense, formal, and sometimes cold relationship with their North Vietnamese counterparts. Most military officers described the environment as “restricted” and “controlled,” and even the most senior officers could travel around North Vietnam only with permission

and a North Vietnamese escort. Many senior Soviet military officers privately criticized the fact that the North Vietnamese seemed very “unappreciative” of the military assistance provided by the Soviet Union. These officers resented the fact that the North Vietnamese restricted Soviet access to crash sites, military equipment, and other sources of valuable technical intelligence. This is supported by information known to the U.S. Government suggesting that the North Vietnamese had a period of extreme anti-Soviet reaction in the late 1960s. The North Vietnamese were concerned with the amount of influence shown by the Soviets, and Hanoi conducted a “purge” by arresting and imprisoning North Vietnamese citizens who were suspected of leaning too closely toward Moscow. Most of those arrested were North Vietnamese citizens who underwent some sort of education in the Soviet Union. These circumstances portray a substantially different relationship than the one first estimated by American analysts.

This does not change the fact that Soviet technicians and intelligence officers had intelligence gathering objectives to fulfill. Both the senior-level personnel in Hanoi, as well as officers with working level contacts in ADA, aviation, and radio-technical units, had requirements to gather information on American equipment, tactics, and the performance of Soviet equipment against American equipment. Many former Soviet officers described going to crash sites, looking at American aircraft in a North Vietnamese “aircraft graveyard,” photographing and examining American equipment removed from crash sites, and gathering information from North Vietnamese pilots, ADA technicians, and field search teams. Many officers passed questions to be asked of American prisoners to their North Vietnamese counterparts. Sometimes this occurred at the working level (where a Soviet military major at an air base might pass specific questions to counterparts for the crew of a specific aircraft shot down on a specific date). At other times, these questions, some general and others specific, were passed via higher level exchanges in Hanoi. Some officers described the answers as coming back in days, others in weeks, and yet others complained that many questions went unanswered. In analyzing how Soviet officers gathered information in North Vietnam, one clear pattern emerges: every officer interviewed clearly stated that Soviet officers were forbidden from approaching, talking to, questioning, or having any contact whatsoever with American prisoners. Several Soviet-era officers described seeing

American POWs at crash sites, in hospitals, and in the streets of Hanoi, but the Soviet officers claimed they never spoke to the American POWs and knew nothing of their fate.

Regarding Russian documents. Among the documents formally passed to the U.S. side of the Commission by the Russian side, there is no first-hand, substantiated evidence suggesting Soviet contact, direct or indirect, with American POWs in Southeast Asia.

However, the documents are full of references to the difficult and restricted relations between and the Soviets. Documents have been received from MFA journals, MFA communication with Moscow, military assessments, and Soviet intelligence analysis. All of these sources describe the frequent problems of lack of North Vietnamese cooperation, restricted access, lack of reciprocity in executing formal relationships and agreements, and obstruction. Several documents include complaints about the Chinese having better and faster access to crash sites and information. One document included complaints that the North Vietnamese would not allow Soviet access to a crash site where new Soviet technology was successfully used for the first time against an air target. The documents available to date support the assertion that the Soviets did not have the authority or position to directly contact or exploit American prisoners.

Extracted portions of the GRU 7-volume study titled “U.S. Aggression in Southeast Asia” proved to be of much value to the Commission work because they represent a genuine, formerly classified reflection of Soviet intelligence holdings on U.S. forces in Vietnam. This meant that if the Soviets had direct access to American prisoners, or a constant flow of strategic information from them, such knowledge would be reflected in GRU intelligence analysis. Careful examination of the contents of the 7-volume study shows that the Soviets gathered a great deal of information from many intelligence sources: debriefs of North Vietnamese pilots, debriefs of ADA crews, information from North Vietnamese crash site search teams, radar and radio-electronic technical information, liaison information, and signals intelligence. There were fragmentary bits of information included in descriptions of certain incidents that suggested that the information was gathered from interrogations of American pilots. Such information was only fragmentary, however, and it probably was available only in singular, unique circumstances. The study clearly lacked the detailed, strategically focused information that would have

been available from the debriefs and interrogations of American air crew personnel if the Soviets had direct contact with American POWs.

From American intelligence holdings. In conjunction with the search for information on the transfer of prisoners to the former Soviet Union, a preliminary search was conducted in the holdings of the U.S. Intelligence Community for evidence, information, perhaps even credible rumors, of Soviet contact with American prisoners. It is inappropriate in this forum to discuss the specifics of the search.

The conclusion of this preliminary review is that American intelligence records contain limited information to suggest that the Soviets had direct or indirect contact with American POWs. The most critical part of the review was the examination of observations made by former Soviets, many of whom served as scientists, researchers, and engineers in the Soviet R&D system. Many former Soviets have provided accounts of having seen American equipment, manuals, and photographs while participating in highly classified programs at Soviet design bureaus and research institutes. None reported seeing or hearing, however, the kind of information associated with the interrogations or debriefings of American prisoners.

From former American prisoners of war in Vietnam. A review of the analytical work from the debriefings of returning American POWs has failed to support the assertion that the Soviets directly interrogated American prisoners. Among the nearly 600 returned POWs, none has ever reported being interrogated by a known or suspected Soviet official. There have been prisoner reports of questions posed by North Vietnamese interrogators which were clearly beyond the scope of Vietnamese capability and sophistication. The incidents described correlate with descriptions of the Soviets and Chinese passing questions for interrogation to the North Vietnamese. None of the POWs reported in their debriefings seeing any “third parties” thought to be Soviet or Chinese participants in interrogations. There are, however, examples of prisoners who were held in North Vietnam who had extensive and detailed knowledge of highly sensitive and classified electronic, aviation, nuclear, and other programs, who were never identified for exploitation. Their information was of sufficient sensitivity to assume that, if the Soviets had a program of identifying and directly interrogating knowledgeable prisoners, they would have been among the first candidates.

Conclusions. In attempting to establish the validity of the thesis that the Soviets directly contacted American POWs, the first-hand, substantiated evidence gathered to date suggests that:

1. There is evidence that the Soviets were very interested in what American POWs knew as part of their overall interest in American equipment, tactics, and capabilities.
2. There is no substantiated evidence that a political decision to directly contact American POWs existed.
3. There is evidence that the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship was complicated, restricted, and cumbersome.
4. There is no first-hand, substantiated evidence that American POWs were directly interrogated or debriefed by Soviet officials.

Prospects. The U.S. side of the Commission continues to believe that interviews with former KGB officers, MFA officers, GRU officers, and other military officers are important. Though there is no first-hand, substantiated evidence that the Russians are concealing direct contact with American POWs, such interviews provide the best insight on what did and did not occur in Southeast Asia with American POWs. Interviews with KGB and GRU officers are the most desirable, since efforts to exploit Americans would have been done by specialists from these organizations. For example, it has been established that Soviet intelligence, specifically the KGB, received assessment information on senior-ranking American prisoners who were captive in Southeast Asia for use in potential recruitment operations after the war. There is no evidence that the Soviets acquired this information themselves. Such information precedes the question as to what the threshold of Soviet activities vis-à-vis American prisoners was: How much did Vietnamese intelligence share with the Soviets? How much did the Soviets ask for? How much did they receive? Such questions will probably only be answered when information is declassified for the historical record. Though this issue has not been investigated to a definitive conclusion, a great deal of positive work has been done to dispel assumptions about the Soviet role in Southeast Asia.

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 3

Question 3: What information is available in Russian archives regarding names, numbers, status, fate, and policies in reference to the repatriation of American POWs in Southeast Asia?

Discussion. Question three resulted after the Russian side of the Commission presented the American side with two controversial documents. In the first document, dated 1971, a North Vietnamese official stated that “735” American POWs were being held. In the second document, dated 1972, another North Vietnamese official stated that 1,205 POWs were being held by the North Vietnamese. The numbers 1205 and 735 are higher than the 591 U.S. servicemen who were returned in early 1973 during Operation Homecoming.

There is debate within the U.S. side of the Commission as to whether the numbers cited in these reports are plausible. A coordinated interagency intelligence analysis released by the Department of Defense on 24 January 1994, casts doubt on the accuracy of the numbers in the Russian documents. Another analysis by U.S. Senator Bob Smith, released on 21 July 1993, lends credibility to the documents.

The controversy regarding the documents comes from the apparent contradictions over their validity. For example, the Russians have persistently claimed that the 1205 and 735 documents were genuine intelligence finds, and though they could not comment on the accuracy of the facts contained in these documents, they have attested to the validity of the source that provided the information. The Vietnamese have dismissed both documents as fabrication. In light of the fact that there is no evidence whatsoever that either of these documents was fabricated by the Russians, either in 1993 (when found) or 1971/2 (when acquired), this contradiction remains difficult to resolve.

Analysis and Preliminary Finding. The VWWG has received important GRU information concerning alleged wartime reports by Vietnamese officials on numbers, names, and policies regarding American POWs in Southeast Asia. We have also received from the archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense limited information concerning specific loss incidents involving American personnel during the Vietnam War. On balance, however, access to Russian archival holdings has been sporadic and

unpredictable, stopping far short of the thorough, systematic review that the U.S. side anticipated would be the bedrock of its research program. Efforts to improve this situation are among the highest priorities of the Commission and the VWWG.

The investigation of this issue to date has been based on the assumption that the Soviets had a definite interest in information about American POWs in Southeast Asia. An investigation was conducted (in Russian archives by the Russians) based on numerous presumptions about the likely nature of Soviet interest and inferences about where information gathered by the Soviets was reported. The memoirs of Andrey Gromyko and Henry Kissinger suggest that there were numerous high-level dialogues between the Soviet Union and the United States on issues concerning American POWs. These discussions ranged from requests that the Soviets intervene to requests that the Soviets provide for the transport of Red Cross packages to American POWs in Hanoi. The argument has been made that information known to the Soviets about American POWs was in many records. Therefore:

1. Information known to Soviet diplomatic personnel would be reflected in Vietnam-era MFA records in Moscow and in records of communications between the MFA in Moscow and Hanoi.
2. Information known to Soviet intelligence organizations would have been reflected in the Moscow intelligence holdings of both the American and Southeast Asian departments, First Chief Directorate, KGB, and the records of the GRU. Such information would also be reflected in the records of communications between Hanoi and the appropriate headquarters in Moscow.
3. Information known to military specialists and technicians would be reflected in the records of the 10th Directorate of the Soviet General Staff, as well as in records of communications between Hanoi and the General Staff in Moscow.
4. Information known to members of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party would be in the CPSU records and may well be in records of information provided to the Politburo.
5. Information may also have been stored in the records of other Soviet institutions which may have had some involvement in the policy and military aspects of the war in Vietnam. If American POWs

had been transported to the Soviet Union, records of maritime, rail, or air transportation may have contained critical information. If POWs had been interrogated by Soviet officials, information may exist with air defense, aviation, research and development, and other Soviet institutions that may have benefited from the information acquired. The Soviet Red Cross, United Nations Observer Group Members, and other Soviet participants in international or relief organizations may have had information stored in their records.

Based on the above presumptions, archival searches have been requested from a broad array of Russian archives and institutions. Requests for archival searches, however, have been complicated by a number of reasons:

Since almost all archival searches have been conducted by the Russians, there remains a disparity between perceptions on both sides as to the degree and depth to which searches should be conducted. The American side, for obvious reasons, desires that the search be conducted in as much depth and detail as possible with the aim of capturing any small piece of information from any source, no matter how obscure. The Russians, who are critically short of resources to conduct searches on so broad a scale, require narrow lines of inquiry in order to use their limited resources effectively. In the long run, it will be difficult to define when the search for information is “complete.”

The question of archival searches is further complicated by the issue of direct versus tangential knowledge. The 1205 document and the 735 document are illustrations of this problem. The information on POWs contained in the 1205 and 735 documents was not the direct information sought by the Soviets when the documents were acquired. Rather, it was tangential information received during the acquisition of information about the inner workings of the North Vietnamese Government. It is probable that information on American POWs in Soviet archives is not in file folders marked “information on American POWs.” Rather, the information of importance to the Commission is likely buried in documents in other categories, such as, communication between Moscow and Hanoi, working notes, information gathering efforts against the North Vietnamese, Soviet policy papers on Vietnam, and so on. This has made the search for information much more difficult, especially given the lack of resources available to our Russian colleagues.

One additional aspect to the process of searching for documents is the reluctance that some archivists may feel toward making public documents that are potentially damaging. In 1993 the disclosure of these documents drew a great deal of attention from the American press and was loud enough to cause friction between Russia and Vietnam. Such a dynamic can only have the effect of causing some to be reluctant to reveal information that may be sensational at face value.

A final source of confusion is the long series of denials from the Russian side. The Russians persistently claim that their archives contain no additional information about American POWs in Vietnam. An example of this is confusion resulting from statements by the KGB and GRU in 1992 that their archives contained no information about American prisoners. However, since 1992, the GRU has provided many references in documents about American shootdowns which included information on the fate of the American aircrews. However, the evidence indicates that the information available to the GRU was tangential to the information they held on the American air war over Southeast Asia. This again leaves the ambiguous question: where should the search for other tangential information be focused?

The search for documents on American POWs in Southeast Asia has been conducted by the Commission for more than four years. The investigation is not complete, though the principal lines of inquiry have been exhausted. The documents provided to date have contained information which allow for the following observations:

Many documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and documents reflecting reports sent to the Soviet leadership, characterize the strained relationship between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam. In some cases, the Soviets accuse the North Vietnamese of not living up to agreements between the two countries, of obstructing and frustrating Soviet efforts to examine crash sites, and of allowing the Chinese to strip crash sites before the Soviets even arrived. Some documents include statements that the Soviets had waited “months” for technical equipment to be packaged and released for shipment to the Soviet Union. The documents also reflect the perception that lower, working-level relationships between Soviet and North Vietnamese personnel were basically functional and cordial, but higher-level exchanges and contacts were strained, insincere, and at times adversarial.

In one report to Leonid Brezhnev from the Minister of Defense, the Soviets praised the shootdown of an American aircraft in North Vietnam by a new Soviet missile system, yet detailed information on the shootdown was promised only “if” the Soviets were “allowed” to visit the crash site by their North Vietnamese colleagues.

The documents provided to date do not support the characterization of the Soviets as the “elder” ally of the North Vietnamese. Documents from diplomatic and Politburo leaders demonstrate that the Soviets informed and advised the North Vietnamese on many issues, but there is no evidence that the Soviets instructed or dictated policy to the North Vietnamese. The Soviets consulted the North Vietnamese before replying to American requests to intervene in issues concerning the war. Many documents show that the North Vietnamese “requested” support from the Soviets and “thanked” them for it, but there are also many references to the North Vietnamese pursuing their own policies and decisions in complete disregard of Soviet positions.

The documents provided to date have substantiated the concerted effort by the Soviets to gather American technical equipment and information. One document stated that the Soviets had worked to acquire more than 700 pieces of American equipment.

Several documents provided to date have stated that information about, and acquired from, U.S. POWs was passed to Soviet officials. Yet many leads pursued in Ministry of Defense archives have failed to produce these documents. Both the former-KGB and the GRU claim not to have any such documents in their holdings.

The documents demonstrate that Soviet members of international observer groups and journalists had contact with American POWs. The Commission has established, through the interview of a former Soviet MFA officer who served in Vietnam, that the Soviet Government encouraged “independent” observers from international observer groups, as well as Czech, East German, French, and Soviet journalists, to meet with prisoners at opportunities staged by the North Vietnamese. Such activities supported the Soviet effort to gain maximum propaganda from the American involvement in Indochina.

Conclusions. The question regarding information available in Russian archives remains a difficult one. Evidence gathered to date suggests that:

1. The Soviets gathered and received information on American POWs in Southeast Asia.
2. The Soviets conducted a focused and centralized gathering effort for information known to American POWs.
3. The Soviet-Vietnamese relationship almost certainly was complicated, restricted and, cumbersome.
4. The search for documents is not near completion, given the likelihood that the information most critical to the work of the Commission is hidden in other files regarding Soviet involvement, policies, and political views on the war in Vietnam.

Prospects. No different than the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War is nearing the point where scholars, historians, and participants will be ready to write a more in-depth history of the Vietnam War from the communist perspective. Much of this effort will be based on new access to both Russian and American archives. Access to some documents has been granted by a new sense of openness, while access to others results from their eventual declassification. Current efforts include the Cold War International History Project and works such as “The Vietnam War and Soviet-American Relations” by Ilya Gaiduk of the Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences.

The final word on this issue is the need for balance. Both sides have consistently pledged to support the mutual work done by the VWWG. For the American side, this means continuing to focus the search as narrowly and precisely as possible so as not to overextend the sparse resources available to the Russians. As for the Russian side, it is hoped that the searches are conducted as thoroughly as possible with thought given to the likelihood that the documents sought will not be identified by the name on the file folder.

The true historical record on this issue requires more evidence from former Soviet archives. There are many documents that must, at least hypothetically, be available in holdings from the period of the Vietnam War.

1. Documents which directed the Soviet propaganda effort during the war.
2. Documents which dictated policy regarding contact with American POWs.
3. Documents which concerned contact with American POWs.
4. Documents which itemized Soviet information gathering priorities in Southeast Asia.

From the Russian perspective, since the above documents do not contain information that directly answer the questions pursued by the VWWG, there is no reason to declassify and publicize them. While researcher access to these documents would not further the resolution of cases of missing Americans in Southeast Asia, such access would assist in writing the historical record of the Vietnam War.

ANALYTICAL ESSAY 4

Question 4: What information is known to citizens of the former Soviet Union that may improve American understanding and analysis of specific incidents of loss in Southeast Asia?

Discussion. The information gathered on specific incidents of loss in Vietnam is an important accomplishment of the Commission's past work, and it represents the area of significant potential for the future.

The U.S. maintains a commitment to the families of all missing servicemembers that the cases regarding the loss of American servicemembers will be investigated until the "fullest possible accounting" has been completed. The establishment of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs added a new dimension to the investigation: the eyewitness accounts of the Soviet personnel who served in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War. We have also gained some access to information from the formerly classified holdings of Soviet military and intelligence services that served in Southeast Asia during the war.

Analysis. Preliminary Finding: Information from citizens of the former Soviet Union has substantially added to American understanding of certain events surrounding specific incidents of loss in Southeast Asia.

The legacy of the Soviet presence throughout Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War is a trail of documents and witnesses that provide detailed information about specific incidents of loss. During more than four years of investigation, the VWWG has received information on specific incidents from the following types of sources:

1. The 7-volume GRU study contained literally dozens of references on the fate of aircrew shot down over Southeast Asia. The GRU has also provided a second, two-page summary of American loss incidents over Southeast Asia which also included anecdotal information on the fate of the aircrews.

2. A Russian journalist provided a list of shootdown incidents from his personal notes. The information was gathered during his tour as a journalist in Southeast Asia and included descriptions of the fliers, who were mentioned by name, being presented to foreign journalists by the North Vietnamese.
3. A senior retired Russian military officer provided a copy of a map on which he had conducted a statistical analysis of American loss incidents during the period of his service in Southeast Asia.
4. Several retired Soviet military officers provided specific information on losses from their personal notebooks, diaries, photograph collections, and other resources. Items provided to investigators for the Commission include photographs of identification cards of downed fliers; photographs of prisoners of war; photographs of equipment removed from American crash sites; and diary pages reflecting questions asked, and the information received, in the interrogation of American POWs by North Vietnamese officers.
5. Many witnesses have provided personal accounts of seeing POWs in Southeast Asia and of specific shootdown incidents over Southeast Asia.

A thorough review and analysis of information gleaned from documents and witnesses allows for several preliminary conclusions:

Anecdotal information on the fate of American pilots are in many Russian documents.

The documents reviewed to date suggest that anecdotal information about the fate of American aircrews was scattered through many Soviet records including pilot debriefings, radio-technical reports, reports on the acquisition of American equipment, possible signal intelligence products, and reports gathered from the Soviet technicians who were assigned down to the regimental level in North Vietnamese aviation and air defense units. Documents allegedly destroyed by the GRU in 1975 probably contained a great deal of information that would have been valuable to the work of the Commission (the GRU ordered a housecleaning in 1975 during which it is alleged that all primary intelligence source documents on which the GRU 7-volume study was based, were destroyed).

In practically every instance Russian witnesses reported only on air loss incidents that occurred over North Vietnam. Virtually all Russian witnesses who have provided information to date have described air incidents over North Vietnam. There has been little information on losses in South Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos, and no information has been collected from Russian sources on ground losses or on aircraft that went down over water. Some witnesses described seeing aircraft go down over Laos from vantage points in North Vietnam, but there is no evidence of Soviet involvement with captures that occurred in Laos. There is no first-hand, substantiated evidence to suggest that the Soviets in North Vietnam had the access or opportunity to gather information on losses outside of North Vietnam.

A review of all documents and testimonials received to date allow for the following observations:

1. Russian documents and witnesses have provided information on the capture of 90 American personnel during shootdowns of U.S. aircraft. Some were captured in single incidents, others in groups from one aircrew. Thirty-five of these reports match the exact circumstances of capture of American personnel, 46 reports roughly match the circumstances of capture of American personnel, and 9 reported cases of capture could not be correlated to an American loss incident. This is roughly a 90 percent correlation. There were no cases where Russian sources reported a capture and American records showed a killed or missing service member.
2. Russian documents and witnesses reported information on 23.6% of the cases (259 reports on incidents of loss out of 1,097), the total number of air loss incidents over North Vietnam. This statistic does not exclude possible redundancy in some reports, which is impossible to verify without more precise information. The highest amount of reporting occurred in 1972, in which Russian sources reported on 115 out of 128 air loss incidents. This may be explained by the fact that Russian reports from 1972 contained large numbers of broad statistics (with claims of as many as 57 aircraft shootdowns in one seven-day period in December 1972; again, redundancies are impossible to detect).

3. The review conducted to date does not suggest a higher or lower level of Soviet information gathering activity during any particular period of the war. The type and amount of information gathered by Soviet technicians seems to be more a result of the duty position, specialization, level of initiative, and curiosity of the individual technician/military officer performing duties in a battery or airwing.
4. From the reports of two Russian witnesses, the U.S. Government has learned additional information verifying the deaths of two American servicemembers shot down during the war in Vietnam. The cases involved two shootdowns: one of an EB-66, the other of an F-4. In both cases, though there was evidence that the two missing American crewmen perished, no remains had been recovered. The Russian witnesses provided additional important information that clarified certain circumstances regarding the case. Though the testimonials of the witnesses are not in themselves conclusive, they are important to the overall analytical assessment of the incidents of loss and are considered significant contributions to the work of the Commission.

Conclusions. The investigative work of the Commission has sought to gather every available scrap of information on incidents of loss in Vietnam. Evidence gathered to date suggests that:

1. There is evidence that the Soviets gathered and received voluminous information that included data on the fate of American servicemembers.
2. There is no evidence that the Soviets had a focused or centralized information collection effort on the fate of American POWs.
3. It remains difficult to conclude that the search for witnesses is nearing conclusion. In fact, the American side of the Commission has many names of Soviet veterans of service during the war in Vietnam who have yet to be interviewed. These witnesses may be capable of providing information that is important to the work of the Commission.

Prospects. Both sides of the Commission agree that many Soviet witnesses to events in Southeast Asia remain to be identified and interviewed. Former Soviet witnesses have provided very unique perspectives to the work of examining individual cases: personal photographs; personal diaries; recollections of exchanges with North Vietnamese counterparts; first-hand observations; even manuscripts for books. Though it is impossible to expect that the Commission can interview every former Soviet veteran of the war in Vietnam, there are methods by which knowledgeable witnesses can be identified and interviewed. These include working with veterans organizations and acquiring leads from the continued search for relevant documents. The success of the Commission is measured by the resolution or illumination of cases for the families of missing servicemembers. Therefore, it is this line of investigation that holds the critical potential for achieving results that reflect the highest aims of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission.

APPENDIX A

Summary of documents received by the Joint Commission Support Directorate

of the Defense POW/MIA Office concerning the Vietnam War

TFR 1-15	Document dated 20 November 1972, requesting approval to send LTC Nechiporenko TDY to Vietnam for 14 days. Signed by LTG Mortin, Chief First Main Directorate, KGB.
TFR 1-16	Document dated 7 February 1974 requesting approval to send LTC Nechiporenko TDY to Vietnam for 14 days. Signed by LTG Mortin, Chief First Main Directorate, KGB.
TFR 2-152-153	A document dated 14 May 1992 and signed by Lezhikov which contains a list of 41 names yielded after checking against a list of 3,752 US servicemen and other foreigners who are listed as missing in South East Asia between 1922-1968.
TFR 3-2-3	Document dated 10 November 1967 addressed to the CPSU CC and signed by Andropov regarding a Japanese pacifist organization's desire to spirit four US Navy defectors from the Aircraft carrier Intrepid out of Japan to Europe, via the Soviet Union. Andropov recommends support for the plan. Duplicate of TFR 32-17 to 32-18.
TFR 3-5-10	Series of documents tracking the status of the four deserters/ defectors referenced in TFR 3-1 to 3-4. These documents are duplicated in TFR 32.
TFR 3-11-21	A series of documents dated April-May 1968 and circulated between the CPSU CC and Andropov regarding the Japanese pacifist organization's continued work in transporting US deserters/defectors to the Soviet Union. Duplicated in TFR 32.
TFR 24-1-2	Undated report to General Volkogonov from the Foreign Intelligence Service reporting on the work done in their archives. States that the 510 list was passed to Senators Kerry and Smith in February 1992, that there is no information available on Cold War era shootdowns, that they searched for information on individuals on the list of 3,752 individuals that was passed to them from the Americans, and that the Foreign Intelligence Service afforded Smith and Kerry the opportunity to meet with Nechiporenko and Sorokin.

TFR 32-2-5	Brezhnev's copy of a 31 July 1965 Ministry of Foreign Affairs classified and coded telegram from Hanoi outlining the successes of the first combat operations by Soviet SAM units in North Vietnam, 24-25 July 1965. Report indicates that the Vietnamese were pleased and that one US pilot was captured during this period. Signed by Shcherbakov.
TFR 32-6	Brezhnev's copy of a 26 July 1965 GRU classified and coded telegram from Hanoi which reports on Soviet SAM operations on 24 and 26 July 1965. Report submitted by Major Ivanov. The first entry indicates that on 26 July 1965 in the area of Sontay, two US aircraft (one U-2, other unk) were shot down. The second entry reports on the engagement of three F-4Cs on 24 July 1965, during which at least one US pilot was captured and another one of the aircraft went down in Laos.
TFR 32-7-8	Brezhnev's copy of a 25 August 1965 Ministry of Foreign Affairs classified and coded telegram from Hanoi that reports on the combat operations of Soviet SAM units deployed to North Vietnam. The report indicates that on 4 August 1965, four US aircraft were shot down south of Hanoi in the vicinity of Ninh Binh, with two US pilots being captured. In a summary of the activity, the report shows that since 24 July 1965, the first regiment had conducted five combat operations, expended 18 missiles, and shot down 14 enemy aircraft. Signed by Shcherbakov.
TFR 32-9-13	A November 1966 unclassified report from General Major of Aviation Lebedev, Soviet Defense Attaché in Hanoi, on the strained relations between the Soviets and the Vietnamese in 1965-1966. Lebedev discusses the pro-Chinese orientation of the Vietnamese leadership and the difficulty the Soviet military had in obtaining access to the results of technical exploitation of US technology. He states that the Vietnamese are asking for detailed strategic information on the US that is of no value to the Vietnamese, so the requests must actually be coming from the Chinese.
TFR 32-14	A ministry of Foreign Affairs memo signed by Gromyko, dated 21 April 1967 to the Central Committee, informing its members that the US Embassy had requested the Soviet Government approach the Vietnamese Government on the issue of allowing the International Red Cross access to US POWs in Vietnam. The MFA recommended denying the US request and informing the Vietnamese of their answer to the US.
TFR 32-15-16	Undated response to the US informing that the Soviets are denying the request related in TFR 32-14.
TFR 32-51-52	Document dated 25 November 1967 from KGB Chairman Andropov to the Central Committee recommending measures to be taken in response to continued US aggression in Vietnam.
TFR 32-53-54	Note dated 27 November 1967 recording the Central Committee's vote on Andropov's proposal made in TFR 32-51 to 32-52.
TFR 32-55-57	Documents dated July 1968 to the Central Committee informing them that another group of US deserters arrived in Moscow. Three Army soldiers deserted from Japan, one of which turned himself into the US Embassy, Moscow.
TFR 32-58-59	Directive from the Central Committee dated 5 June 1969, outlining how to respond to the US Embassy's latest request for Soviet assistance in opening the door for International Red Cross access to US POWs held in North Vietnam.

TFR 32-6-61	Document dated 3 July 1970 on the Soviet intelligence effort in Hanoi during the second quarter of 1970. Signed by Katro.
TFR 32-62-63	A 28 March 1972 MFA memo discussing the issue of the delivery of US mail and parcels through the Soviet Union to American POWs in North Vietnam.
TFR 32-64-65	Document dated 26 September 1972 from the MFA informing the Central Committee that three freed US POWs are transiting Moscow to the US.
TFR 32-66-67	Document dated 16 January 1986 detailing US-Vietnamese discussions in January 1986. The detail of the report suggests that the Soviets had good access to North Vietnamese government information.
TFR 130-1	List entitled "List of Documents Regarding American Citizens Imprisoned in the DRV". Lists documents contained in this TFR.
TFR 130-2	Document dated 21 April 1967 addressed to the Central Committee of the CPSU and signed by Gromyko forwarding a US request to implore the DRV to allow International Red Cross access to US POWs in Vietnam. Gromyko proposes to decline the US request and respond to the US verbally. Draft verbal response is in TFR 130-3.
TFR 130-3	Undated draft verbal response to the US request of 11 April 1967 imploring the Soviet Union to use its influence with North Vietnam to allow International Red Cross access to US POWs. States that North Vietnam is a sovereign country and if the USA wants something from them, they need to deal directly with the North Vietnamese. Soviets feel that to appeal on a humanitarian issue like this is extremely impertinent when daily bombings of innocent civilians is conducted by the US.
TFR 130-4	Letter dated 5 June 1969 addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party with recommendations on handling the US request, delivered by Jacob Beam, to act as an intermediary with North Vietnam in the POW issue. Recommends that the request be coordinated with the North Vietnamese before any action is taken.
TFR 130-5	Central Committee of the CPSU decree dated 6 June 1969 approving the draft directive to the Soviet Ambassador in Vietnam on the US inquiry on the POW issue contained in TFR 130-4.
TFR 130-6	Russian translation of a letter from US Ambassador Jacob Beam to Gromyko dated 1 June 1970 forwarding a copy of House Concurrent Resolution 582 which concerns the treatment of US POWs in SE Asia.
TFR 130-7-8	Russian translation of House Concurrent Resolution 582 that was forwarded with TFR 130-6.
TFR 130-9	English version of TFR 130-6 dated 1 June 1970, but with handwritten Russian notations.
TFR 130-10	English version of House Concurrent Resolution 582 dated 19 January 1970.
TFR 130-11	Note dated 26 September 1972 to the Central Committee of the CPSU informing that three US pilots freed by the Vietnamese are going to be transiting through Moscow enroute to Stockholm. Accompanying them are family members and anti-war activists. The US asks

for permission to contact them to aid in their return to the US. The note states that the returning pilots be told of the US request and to allow this to happen only if the repatriates are willing to do so.

- TFR 130-12 Draft Decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU dated 26 September 1972 agreeing with the recommendations set forth in TFR 130-11.
- TFR 130-13-14 Two page MFA document dated 16 January 1986 reporting on the visit of a high ranking US delegation to Vietnam. States that the MIA issue and the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea were the subjects of conversation. The Vietnamese wanted the US not to tie the MIA issue together with the normalization of relations with Vietnam. Upon the US delegation return to the USA, a statement was issued that relations would not be normalized until the MIA issue is resolved. The Vietnamese believe that this ran counter to the agreements reached in Hanoi during the visit.
- TFR 136-1-3 Three page summary of the 15 September 1972 report to the Vietnamese Politburo by the Deputy Chief of the Vietnamese People's Army General Staff, Tran Van Quang, on American POWs. Unsigned and undated, but stamped with a CPSU Central Committee stamp dated 1 December 72.
- TFR 136-4-10 Partial text of the report by General Tran Van Quang referenced in TFR 136-1. Many pages of this report appear to be missing. The report starts on page 17 and abruptly ends on page 22. These are the documents published by Izvestia and the NY Times on 10 and 12 April 1993 respectively, and have become the focus of high interest.
- TFR 136-11-14 Four page document dated 14 March 1967 which states that there is a group of Soviet specialists in Vietnam collecting and analyzing captured US equipment and technical documents. States that the Soviets have received over 700 pieces of US military equipment to include: parts of aircraft, missiles, radio electronics, photo reconnaissance, and other types of equipment. The Vietnamese say that the Soviets have received only 417 pieces. In spite of the great benefit to both the Soviet Union and North Vietnam of this group, the Vietnamese are making work very difficult. States that when the Soviets go to a crash site, the trip is prolonged and round about. Says that the Chinese also get involved and are a hindrance to their work. Cites one example when the Soviets visited a site where an (improved model) reconnaissance aircraft crashed in January 1967. When they got there, the Chinese had already striped it of anything valuable and had prepared the aircraft remains for demolition. In order to smooth the Russians' anger, the Vietnamese gave them a Shrike missile which they had been trying to get for a long time. States that the Vietnamese bureaucracy bogs down the specialists' work. Takes from 2-3 months from when the equipment is collected before they can finally ship it to the Soviet Union. States that there are friendly relations with the Vietnamese. Says they get more done unofficially than through official channels by dealing with the individual as opposed to the bureaucracy. Apparently, there was an agreement between the Soviets and the Vietnamese that the Vietnamese were not adhering to closely. The Soviet specialists were to be informed monthly of the combat situation, aerial combats and be given the interrogation reports of captured American pilots and information on ECM effects against American missiles and aerial tactics. Sums up that something must be done to improve the ability of the Soviet specialists to do their work.
- TFR 136-15-17 Excerpt from the diary of I.S. Shcherbakov, Soviet Ambassador to North Vietnam. This excerpt is a three page transcript of a meeting with Nguyen Duy Chinh, dated 23 July 1970. Chinh is the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Vietnam. The Soviets

originally requested to meet with Le Duan, but were told that Duan is ill. The Vietnamese were given a letter from Brezhnev offering assistance in constructing a mausoleum for Ho Chi Minh. There is discussion about the design and construction of the mausoleum, and whether or not Ho Chi Minh's body will be displayed during the 25th anniversary of the DRV celebration. States that the CC CPSU has agreed to accept Chan Khyu Zyk and Bin' Fyong [phonetic] into Moscow in August for medical treatment. Xuan Thui has returned from Paris and briefed the DRV government about the activities of the delegation he headed in Paris. The analysis of the latest steps of the Nixon Administration leads the Vietnamese to believe that Nixon may pull out 50 thousand American troops by October of this year, in connection with the US elections. The possibility of the withdrawal of 150 thousand American troops by Spring of next year remains for the Vietnamese simply words. The alleged letter by 89 American senators addressed to Pham Van Dong has still not been received, but the report about the letter has attracted Vietnamese interest. Nguyen thi Binh, Foreign Minister for the Provisional Revolutionary Council of the Republic of South Vietnam made a successful trip to India, in the opinion of both the North Vietnamese and the Soviets. Nguyen thi Binh will be leaving for a trip to Ceylon on the invitation of Sirimavo Bandarananke. Discussion about two South Vietnamese traitors and American attempts to use them in a "sensational disclosure." The USSR and Eastern European Dept. advisor Nguyen Tan, Dang Dich Khoi and USSR Embassy attaché Kuz'minov.

TFR 136-18-22 A five page memorandum, dated 1 September 1971, on the history and current status of US-Vietnamese contacts, from 31 March 1968 when Johnson discontinued bombing north of the 20th parallel to the date of issue of the memorandum. On 26 July 1971, Kissinger lays out a three phase plan to the North Vietnamese for stabilizing the situation in Vietnam. The first phase of the plan calls for a mutual declaration of principles. One of the points of this declaration is the release and return of all POWs.

TFR 136-22A-50 Selective 29 page excerpt from a political summary for the year 1970 by the USSR Embassy in North Vietnam. Discussion of how North Vietnam is integrating into the international socialist camp; of the evolution of Vietnamese political thought in relation to Soviet and Chinese thinking; about the economic climate, including a detailed account of Soviet financial and technical aid; and about Soviet military assistance. States that in a number of cases, the Vietnamese have begun to better inform the Soviets about actions taken and, as an example, the transfer of lists of American POWs. Contains a table of foreign aid in rubles given by Socialist Countries to Vietnam, for the years 1970 and 1971 (expected). Discusses the lack of trust on the part of the Vietnamese and the obstacles that the Vietnamese set up which prevent better Soviet-Vietnamese relations. The document ends with conclusions and suggestions for improving the political and economic relations with Vietnam.

Note: TFR 136-22A is a result of this page being skipped over during the initial numbering of the document.

TFR 136-51-58 Excerpt from the diary of I. S. Shcherbakov, Soviet Ambassador to North Vietnam. This excerpt is an eight page transcript of a meeting with Khoang Van Tien, dated 17 January 1973. Tien is the Deputy Foreign Minister of the DRV. Begins with overview of current political situation surrounding American involvement in Vietnam. Next is a description of the Kissinger - Le Duc Tho talks of 8-13 January 1973 concerning the wording, and signing and concerning various points of a treaty to be signed 27 January. This is followed by a discussion concerning whom the Vietnamese will inform about the contents of these talks. There is also a discussion about the situation in the other Indonesian countries and about Vietnamese-Cambodian relations. States that the Soviets are willing to assist in clearing

North Vietnamese ports of mines. The Vietnamese believe that Washington should be responsible for this. The discussion ends with the Soviets asking how the Vietnamese will celebrate their victory. The Vietnamese answer that they are more pre-occupied with ensuring that the US live up to the agreement, with attracting international assistance in rebuilding North and South Vietnam, and with making sure that the South Vietnamese revolution withstands to the end.

- TFR 179-1-2 Two pages of undated, but recent documents summarizing the shootdown and capture of aviators in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Gives dates and reports that 94-97 aircraft were shot down and 58 aviators were captured from 24 July 65 through 27 June 1972. This appears to be a recent Russian analysis from other documents and was probably prepared specifically for the August Joint Commission meeting.
- TFR 179-3-5 Three page undated report of Hoang Anh, the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, to its 20th Plenum which was held at the end of December 70 to the beginning of January 1971. Reports that the total number of captured American pilots in the DRV is 735.
- TFR 186-1-12 Twelve page undated report covering the activities of the International Investigatory Commission's 16 July - 1 August 1970 trip to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Commission consisted of G. Frank of Sweden and A.I. Poltorak (report author). They met with several North Vietnamese Commissions to include the Commission investigating US war crimes. They were taken to various sights where these alleged crimes took place, met with locals, and were given the opportunity to talk to three US aviators and one deserter. No names given.
- TFR 186-13-16 Four page Russian translation of a North Vietnamese document dated 10 February 1971 accusing the US of violating numerous Geneva Accords, escalating the war, being military adventurers, and spreading imperialist aggression in Laos and Cambodia.
- TFR 186-17-19 Three page document dated 16 January 1969 from the journal of S. Divil'kovskij, a Soviet Embassy Advisor to North Vietnam detailing meetings that he had with Ngyuen Fu Soaem, the representative of the People's Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (PFLSV) during the 30 December 1968 to 3 January 1969 period. Nothing related to POW/MIAs.
- TFR 186-20-22 Three page document from the journal of G.V. Cheshev, second secretary of the Soviet Embassy in North Vietnam, dated 31 January 1969 detailing a meeting that he had on 23 January 1969 with Vladislav Baduryj. It lists the four-point American-Saigon program that is to be discussed at the conference in Paris, touches on the role the Chinese are playing in supplying the PFLSV with weapons and looks at the Buddhist/Catholic religious dilemma.
- TFR 186-23-26 Four page document dated 29 September 1969 that reviews the military operations being conducted by the US backed Vietnamese and Suvanno Fyma forces and the Patriotic Front of Laos who are supported by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It looks at the objectives of the operations, how they were backed, who supported them, and their success or failure.
- TFR 186-27-31 Five page document dated 29 September 1969 that reviews the situation in Laos in the areas controlled by the leftist group Neo Lao Khak Sat (NLKhS), who are supported by China and the DRV, looks at their operational objectives, and successes. It reviews the role of the International Control Commission and the problems it faces in Southeast Asia.

- TFR 186-32-33 Two page document dated 2 February 1971 from the journal of I. S. Shcherbakov, Soviet Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), detailing his meeting with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRV Khoang Van Tien. US military operations and objectives in Southern Laos were discussed.
- TFR 186-34-35 Two page document dated 12 November 1970 from the journal of I. M. Merkulov, Advisor to the Soviet Embassy in the DRV, detailing his meeting with Ta Khyu Kan, the Deputy Director of Soviet and Eastern European Department. Kan presented an upgrade in postal privileges for arrested American fliers, the attempts by American millionaires to manipulate world opinion against the DRV and asked for Soviet aid to counter it.
- TFR 186-36 One page document dated 13 November 1970 from the journal of M. P. Isaev, Secretary of the Southeast Asia Department of the USSR MID, detailing a meeting with the First Secretary of the DRV Embassy in the USSR Ngyuen Van Kuang concerning the new humanitarian measures taken for captured US Fliers.
- TFR 186-37-40 Four page document dated 25 February 1971 detailing the meeting between the Deputy Director of the South-East Asia Department of the MID USSR V. P. Vdovin and the advisor sent to Moscow by the DRV Embassy Vu Tuan. Tuan reported on the situations in Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam concerning South Vietnamese and American forces and their activities as well as the activities of the patriots (North Vietnam). He requested that the Soviets speak out on his behalf at the Red Cross Conference and support their position on the American POW issue.
- TFR 186-41 Message dated 12 January 1971 from the Soviet Ambassador to the DRV for routing a letter.
- TFR 186-42-43 Letter dated 31 December 1970 to the General Secretary of the TsK KPSS USSR Brezhnev and Chairman of the Council of Ministers Kosygin from the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Worker's Party Le Zuan and the Prime Minister of the DRV Fam Van Dong. It thanks the Soviets for their support at the recent Warsaw Pact meeting and the recent statement made by the Soviet Government stating its support of the Worker's Party and the government of the DRV.
- TFR 186-44-45 Two page document dated 18 May 1971 detailing the meeting between the Deputy Director of the South-East Asia Department MID USSR Yu. I. Kuznetsov and DRV Embassy advisor Vu Toan. Toan requests permission for the VIP aircraft, carrying the DRV Deputy Prime Minister and other state officials to the XIV session of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party in Prague, to make a stop in Irkutsk to take on a Soviet navigator and food and for a stop over in Moscow on the return flight. He also asks the Soviets to support the DRV position on American POWs at the upcoming Red Cross Conference in Geneva.
- TFR 186-46-49 Document dated 1 July 1971 from the journal of I. S. Shcherbakov detailing his meeting with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for the DRV Ngyuen Ko Tkhat. Reports on Le Dak Tho and Suan Tkhyui's meeting with Kissinger in Paris on 26 June 1971 and reiterates the North Vietnamese position for ending the war. Emphatically states that the release of US POWs will start and end on the same days that the withdraw of US and allied forces starts/ends.
- TFR 186-50 Note dated 23 July 1971 requesting that K.V. Rusakov prepare a proposal in reference to TFR 186-52.

TFR 186-51	Note dated 6-7 July 1971 to V Chebrikov in reference to TFR 186-53.
TFR 186-52	Letter from the Deputy Chairman of the KGB V. Chebrikov dated 2 July 1971 approving the proposal from M. V. Zakharov to create Aeroflot flights in association with the FRG firm "Ostturst" for flying passengers from Hanoi to Paris via Moscow. He requests that, since this will include the transport of about 5,000 people, the topic of organizing a transfer of American POWs could arise and would like the point of view of the DRV to be clarified.
TFR 186-53	The proposal made by M. Zakharov (mentioned in TFR 186-52) for Aeroflot to develop charter routes from Peking to any destination in Europe. Knoblokh, director of the German tourist firm "Ostturst", arrived in Paris to conclude the contract on 26 June 1971. The Aeroflot representatives in Paris have come to the conclusion that the topic of discussion is the organization of the transfer of American POWs. They believe that the DRV and USA are in the process of, or have already, agreed to free them.
TFR 186-54	Letter dated 20 July 1971 from B. Bugaev from the office of the Civil Aviation Ministry USSR to the TsK KPSS stating that the proposed chartered flights are not desirable because the Chinese would in turn make the same request for routes to Europe. He states that the civil aviation is ready to fly the chartered route of Hanoi-Vientiane-Calcutta-Karachi-Tashkent-Moscow-Paris (or another unspecified European city). Permission from third party countries (Burma, Pakistan) would be required along with a contract, no less than 16 days prior to the flight.
TFR 186-55-56	Letter dated 3 August 1971 and signed by the Head of the Department for Administrative agencies TsK KPSS North Savinkin, Deputy Head of the Department of the TsK KPSS for ties with Communist and Worker's Parties in Socialist States O. Rakhmanin, and the Deputy Head of the International Department of the TsK KPSS R. Ul'yanovskij to the TsK KPSS (with reference to TFR 186-52, -53, -54) voices concern on project due to ambiguities in the origin and terminal locations, number of passengers and their nationalities etc., and suggest that the proposal not be adopted.
TFR 186-57	List dated 18 August 1993 of the documents found in TFR 186-52 to 186-55 with archival designators showing document number, document content, search information and number of pages.

TFR 210-2 **Volume 1**

TFR 210-3

States that the first aerial combat of the war was on 4 April 1965 when the flight of North Vietnamese Captain Khan' discovered a group of four F-105s at 3,000 meters and shot down one of them. The second pair of Captain Khan's group also shot down one F-105 which crashed into the sea. No locations given for this combat.

The second aerial combat of the war was on 4 June 1965 in the area of Bu-Ban between a flight of MiG-17s and three F-4Hs. The Vietnamese gave credit for the shootdown of the lead F-4H which crashed in Laos.

The third battle of the war was on 17 June 1965 in the area of Nin'-Bin' was between a flight of MiG-17s and a flight of F-4Hs. As a result of this battle, two F-4Hs were shot down. Of the four Vietnamese fighters, only one returned to base. Two of the MiG-17s were abandoned when they ran out of fuel and one made a forced landing at the Haiphong airfield. States that in previous combat, there was mass confusion in the air.

- TFR 210-4 Another air battle occurred on 20 September 1965 in the area of the train station at Kep, 60 kilometers northeast of Hanoi. The alert flight of MiG-17s was scrambled from Noi-Bai to intercept a flight of F-4Bs that was going to attack the rail station. As a result of this combat, an F-4B that was making a bomb run on the station was shot down. The two-man crew of this F-4B was killed when their aircraft impacted. This page then goes on to generally summarize the results of combat in 1965. It states that the MiG-17 was successful against F-105s and F-4Hs and also that US pilots were primarily interested in defensive tactics and attempted to extract themselves from combat as quickly as possible. States that the Vietnamese pilots were not adequately trained for combat, that the ground controlled intercept functioned well, but control was lost once the aircraft were engaged. After a study of the aerial combats, the US deployed an additional 36 F-104 fighter-interceptors and 10 F-4 fighters to Thailand. On 19 June 1966, F-104s were used as escort for fighter-bombers raiding North Vietnam.
- TFR 210-5 The first MiG-21 aerial combat occurred on 23 April 1966 when a pair of MiG-21s attacked a flight of 4 F-4Cs, that was escorting radar jamming RB-66s. Two F-4s managed to launch two Sidewinders apiece which were unsuccessful. Another battle occurred on this date when six MiG-17s attacked four F-4Cs, that were escorting 16 F-105s. In this combat, two US aircraft and two North Vietnamese aircraft were shot down.
- As a result of the battles on 23 April 1966, US pilots stated that the Vietnamese fought with great skill and that the MiG-17 was more maneuverable than the F-4C but was inferior in diving and in climbing.
- TFR 210-6 **Volume 2**
- TFR 210-7 19 June 1966, two MiG-17s flying over Noi-Bai detected two F-105s approaching for an attack and shot one of them down. The surviving F-105 evaded attack. The pair of MiGs then detected another F-105 which they managed to shoot down as well.
- 7 June 1966, a pair of MiG-21s detected two F-105s over Noi-Bai and managed to shoot one down by cannon fire. The leader of the MiGs was armed with missiles but was unable to launch because of the frantic maneuvering of the F-105.
- 13 June 1966 a flight of MiG-17s was scrambled to attack a group of 12 Naval A-4s that was going to attack a bridge over the Red River near Hung-En and managed to shoot down two A-4s. The MiGs then were attacked by the 8 F-4Bs that were providing cover. The leader of a pair of MiGs was shot down, but the F-4B was then shot down by the MiG wingman.
- TFR 210-8 12 August 1966, a pair of MiG-17s, covered by a pair of MiG-21s shot down one of a group of four F-105s.
- 18 August 1966, a flight of MiG-17s was scrambled from Noi-Bai to battle 8 F-105s that were conducting ground attack near Noi Bai. Immediately after take-off, they encountered the F-105s at 500 meters and shot down one of them. There were no Vietnamese combat losses, but one of them was accidentally shot down by friendly AAA fire while making a landing approach.
- A similar incident to the one immediately above occurred on 22 August 1966. Two pairs of MiG-17s conducting a defensive fighter patrol over Noi-Bai conducted a series of three engagements at 400-500 meters with three groups (12 aircraft [not sure if this is 12 aircraft

total or 12 aircraft in each group]). During these engagements, two F-105s were shot down. A Vietnamese aircraft was shot down by friendly AAA fire while returning to base.

TFR 210-9

5 September 1966, US air assets were especially active in the area of Fu-Li (55 KM south of Hanoi) trying to destroy the rebuilt bridge over the Song-Dai River. At 1630 hrs, the P-30 radar station detected a group of aircraft heading for the bridge at Fu-li. A pair of MiG-17s were in the air at the time and were directed to intercept them. As a result of the aerial combat, two US A-8s were shot down.

16 September 1966, Four Vietnamese MiG-17s were successful in combat with a group of eight US F-4Cs in the area of Hai-Duong. The F-4Cs launched a total of 12 air-to-air missiles with no success. Two F-4Cs were shot down and one was damaged. 21 September 1966, a flight of MiG-17 engaged a group of eight F-105s and 4 F-4Cs in the area of the Kep airfield. One F-4C was shot down and an F-105 shot down a MiG-17. The Vietnamese pilot ejected.

TFR 210-10

There were eight aerial engagements in October 1966 with the engagements on the 5, 8, and 9 October 1966 being the most successful.

A flight of MiG-21s of the 921st Fighter Aviation Regiment were scrambled from the Noi-Bai airfield on 0900 hrs on 5 October 1966 to engage two RB-66 aircraft that were jamming. An RB-66 was shot down by a R-3s missile.

9 October 1966 at 0750, two MiG-21s were scrambled in reaction to a raid of 28 F-4s and F-8s in the area of Khao-Bin' (50 km southwest of Hanoi). Two F-4s were shot down and the aircrews captured and one MiG was also shot down.

9 October 1966 at 0900, in the same area, a pair of MiG-17s of the 923rd Fighter Aviation Regiment detected two A-1Hs and four F-4Hs. One A-1H and one MiG were shot down. The pilot ejected [Does not specify if it was the American or Vietnamese pilot. Most likely it was the Vietnamese by the placement of this sentence in the paragraph].

TFR 210-11

2 December 1966, 10 MiG-21s of the 921st Fighter Aviation Regiment were scramble to engage a group of 38 F-105s and 10 F-4Cs approaching from Thailand. At the same time, 18 MiG-17s of the 923rd Fighter Aviation Regiment were scrambled from Gi-Lam airfield to defend Noi-Bai airfield. The Vietnamese [MiG-21 pilots?] engaged the enemy aircraft and shot down two of them with eight missiles. The Americans launched two missiles with negative results. At the same time, there was intensive AAA and SAM activity. In all, 12 USAF aircraft were shot down on this day.

TFR 210-12

5 December 1966, three pairs of MiG-21s intercepted a group of about 16 F-105s. Two F-105s were shot down by missiles and the rest ejected their stores and ran for home.

8 December 1966, two pairs of MiG-21s were scrambled to intercept a group of 16 F-105 heading towards Noi-Bai. The enemy was intercepted 70 km northwest of Hanoi. The Vietnamese launched four missiles and shot down two F-105s. Immediately upon being attacked, the Americans jettisoned their stores and retreated toward Laos.

13 December 1966, from 1505-1530, 8 MiG-21s and 8 MiG-17s of the 921st Fighter Aviation Regiment were scrambled to intercept a group consisting of 50 F-105s and F-4Cs and 40 A-4s, F-8s, and F-4Bs. 4 MiG-17s of the 923rd Fighter Aviation Regiment were scrambled to provide cover for the airfield. The first three groups of enemy fighters were engaged, one F-105 was shot down, and the rest reversed course. The next group of 12 enemy

fighters continued on to Hanoi, dropped bombs on the rail depot at Gia-Lam and on anti-aircraft positions on the outskirts of Hanoi.

- 14 December 1966, DRV fighter defended against a mass raid on Hanoi. There were about 140 Air Force and Naval aircraft in this raid. 14 MiG-21PFLs and 16 MiG-17Fx were scrambled to intercept 60 aircraft approaching from Thailand.
- TFR 210-13 Upon encountering these MiGs, 24 F-105s dropped their bombs and fled. Two F-105s and one pilotless 147J recce drone were shot down by 5 air-to-air missiles and 28 free-flight rockets.
- TFR 210-14 Flight of 54 American aircraft, to include 24 F-4C aircraft, flew toward the Noj-Baj airfield. The airfield serves as the base for the 921st fighter regiment. The 24 F-4C aircraft flew directly to the airfield and the 30 remaining aircraft continued on in the direction of the POL warehouse at Tyun-Ze, imitating an air strike on it. During approach to the airfield, the enemy fighter cover broke off into several groups and began to conduct a defensive fighter patrol (DFP) around the airfield in four zones.
- TFR 210-15 The fighters flew a DFP in order to improve their ability to detect DRV fighters. There were groups of four fighter aircraft at an altitude of 2,500 - 3,000 meters 15 - 20 km from the airfield and groups of two at an altitude of 4,000 - 5,000 meters 40 - 80 km from the airfield. Every fighter providing cover was equipped with four "Sidewinder" and four "Sparrow" missiles. Their mission was to destroy any DRV aircraft which attempted to takeoff. There was total cloud cover and the American aircraft waited for the MiG-21s above it. This information was reported by an American flier POW who was shot down in an aerial battle on 6 January 1967.
- TFR 210-16 Despite the complicated and extremely unfavorable situation, the central command post issued the order for the 2nd flight of MiG-21s to takeoff.
- TFR 210-17 The first salvo of missiles shot down the MiG-21 and the pilot bailed out successfully. The remaining DRV fliers increased speed and engaged the enemy aircraft. The MiGs used two R-3s missiles and several salvos of cannon fire to knock down two American F-4C aircraft. The Americans continued to attack. Each MiG had six to eight missiles shot at it but not one missile hit its target. The aerial battle was characterized by a large number of American fighters, tasked to destroy the North Vietnamese aircraft in the air. They were supported by ECM aircraft and search and rescue helicopters of the USAF
- The aerial battle on 6 January 1967 was conducted in a similar fashion. During the approach of the American aircraft toward the Noj-Baj airfield, the deputy commander of the 921st fighter regiment gave the order for the to remain on the ground and ordered that the approaching enemy be destroyed by anti-aircraft artillery. 100mm anti-aircraft artillery cannons opened fire and the order came from the central command post for the MiG-21 flight to takeoff. After the MiGs had taken off, they were immediately attacked by six F-4C aircraft, who were positioned above and behind them, after breaking through the cloud cover (Drawing 40).
- TFR 210-18 They shot 20 missiles at the MiGs and downed two North Vietnamese fighters. The pilots from the MiG-21s ejected, but one of them died due to a parachute failure. The remaining DRV fighters made a banked turn and engaged in the aerial battle. The Hero of the Vietnamese People's Army, Major Chanh-Khanh shot a F-4C with a R-3s missile and the aircraft began to smoke and flew away into the cloud cover. The American aircraft

disengaged. This aerial battle took place at an altitude of 2,500 - 3,000 meters, 60 km from the airfield.

February 1967, DRV fighter aircraft conducted 58 sorties to provide cover for important military targets and to repulse air attacks by American aircraft. 32 of these sorties were conducted at night. Chinese fighters conducted eight sorties during this time frame. There was an aerial battle which involved a flight of MiG-17s from the 923rd fighter aviation regiment against four F-4C aircraft. This engagement occurred 50 km southwest of Hanoi. The enemy (American) aircraft were visually detected at an altitude of 1,200-1,500 meters and the North Vietnamese fighters attacked with cannon fire. The wingman of the second pair shot down one US fighter.

Only one flight of MiG aircraft directly participated in the aerial battle which occurred on 26 March 1967. They attacked six American aircraft. The result of the attack was that one F-105 was shot down and one F-4C was damaged.

TFR 210-19

Twenty-four MiG-17 and six MiG-21 aircraft engaged 20 F-105 and F-4C American aircraft on 19 April 1967. The group of MiGs contained eight MiG-17 aircraft, piloted by Koreans. The enemy air attack was repulsed. The battle resulted in the loss of two American F-105 and two A-1H were damaged. All Vietnamese and Korean aircraft returned to their respective bases. Two MiG-17s suffered damage from cannon fire.

Two aerial battles occurred on 24 April 1967. Participants included 16 MiG-17 aircraft. They shot down four American aircraft without suffering any losses. One of the aircraft was shot down by Korean pilots. The aerial battle took place at an altitude of 600 - 2,200 meters and at a speed of 950 - 1,100 kph.

The aerial battle by the DRV fighter flight, commanded by Hero of the Vietnamese People's Army Baj (Drawing 41), was successful. The aircraft staged from the Kyn-An airfield (near Haiphong). The pilots detected several enemy fighters on an intercept course. The flight leader closed on an F-4H and downed it with cannon fire. The second pair of American fighters noted the attacking MiG and shot four air-to-air missiles at it. The wingman of the pair of MiGs noticed the missile launches and informed his leader by radio. Due to Baj's expert maneuvers, the missiles missed their targets and, continuing their flight, hit the leader of the F-4H pair and knocked it down. The remaining American fighters broke off the attack and the MiGs landed at the Gia-Lam airfield.

Ten groups, including 72 MiG-17 and MiG-21 aircraft, took part in the next seven aerial battles, which occurred on 25, 26 and 28 April 1967.

Two MiG-21 aircraft scrambled to intercept a RB-66 aircraft conducting ECM operations at 1542 on 28 April 1967. The central command post vectored them to the target. During the flight toward the RB-66, two F-105 aircraft were sighted. The MiGs reported the sighting in and attacked the fighters from the rear hemisphere. The MiGs fired R-3s missiles on the wingman of the F-105 pair. The missile attack was unsuccessful and the MiG wingman began an attack run. He launched a R-3s missile and the wingman of the F-105 formation. There was no ECM during the attack.

30 April at 1620, a pair of MiG-21 aircraft scrambled from the Noj-Baj airfield to destroy American aircraft which were operating in the area of Fu-Tkho. The flight leader was Senior Lieutenant Khueh, the wingman was Senior Lieutenant Dinh. There was 50% - 70% cloud cover with the edge at 3,200 meters. The visibility was 10 km. The target indicators were provided by the command post of the 921st fighter regiment. The MiGs encountered

a pair of F-105 aircraft at an altitude of 3,000 meters 90 km out from the North Vietnamese fighters airfield. The F-105 aircraft also noticed the MiGs and began to turn.

TFR 210-20

The MiGs attacked the American aircraft. Senior Lieutenant Khuehn shot a missile at the leader of the F-105 formation, but missed. Senior Lieutenant Dinh shot a missile at the wingman of the F-105 pair and the F-105 exploded in the air. The second attack by Senior Lieutenant Khuehn was successful and the missile hit the exhaust of the F-105 and the plane was destroyed. The pilot of the F-105 ejected and was captured.

During the course of the aerial battles in April, the North Vietnamese and Korean pilots shot down 22 American aircraft. The most successful aerial battle occurred on 28 April when a flight of eight MiG-17 aircraft scrambled to repulse an air attack against the Haiphong airfield and downed four American F-4H and A-4 aircraft.

TFR 210-21

Freight was shipped by rail to Dong-Fong-Tuong from Hanoi and by ship and barge from the Haiphong region.

The mission to destroy warehouses and communications nodes was given to the 77th aircraft carrier strike force. The mission was developed by the command staff of Rear Admiral D. Richardson. The strike wing from the aircraft carriers "Kitty Hawk", "Coral Sea" and "Ticonderoga" (aircraft types "Phantom", "Crusader", "Sky Hawk" and "Intruder" were to be used). The primary targets were the bridges, a steam ferry and warehouses. The strike was to be conducted over the course of two days. The strike on the first day was conducted by the 9th aviation wing from the aircraft carrier "Ticonderoga". The 192nd ground attack squadron conducted the strike on the railroad bridge. The strike was carried out by two groups of aircraft. The first group employed guided missiles "Bullpup" and the second used 1,000 lb bombs. Two pair of ground attack aircraft were given the mission to knock out specific points of anti-aircraft artillery and air defense missile units which were protecting the bridge. The 194th fighter squadron carried out a strike on the rail branch line. One fighter from the squadron was assigned to cover the reconnaissance aircraft which was to take photographs to be used for battle damage assessment.

On the following day, after the battle damage assessment had been studied and prior to the reconnaissance of the Dong-Fong-Tuong area, the 85th ground attack squadron from the aircraft carrier "Kitty Hawk", equipped with "Intruder" aircraft, carried out a strike on the bypass railroad bridge using 1,000 lb bombs. The ground attack fighters approached the bridge at a very low altitude in order to avoid the loose PVO systems however, one "Intruder" was shot down. As a result of the attack, one bridge span was destroyed.

TFR 210-22

Volume 3

TFR 210-23

20 August 1967 at 1213 hrs, a pair of MiG-21 aircraft were launched from the Noi-Bai airfield to intercept a group of American aircraft that were approaching Fu-To (75 km northwest of Hanoi). After climbing to an altitude of 5000 m, the aircraft headed for the area of Viet-Chu. From there, following commands from the TsKP PVO and VVS VHA, they started to enter into the rear hemisphere of the trailing group of American aircraft. The TsKP could carry out accurate guidance due to radio interference, and led its fighters out at a distance of 20 km from the enemy. The fliers radioed that they had not discovered the enemy. After that, guidance was transferred to the regimental KP [command post]. On its command, the fighters descended to an altitude of 2500 m and started to disengage for an attack on another group of aircraft. At 1225 hours the wingman of a pair of North

Vietnamese fighters saw two F-4 aircraft ahead and to the right. He reported this to his leader and requested permission to attack. Having received permission, he closed with the group of enemy aircraft and fired an R-3s rocket from a distance of 1500-2000 meters, which exploded before it reached the target. Seeing the explosion of the rocket, the American fliers increased speed and with a heading maneuver started to gain altitude. Following them, the wingman of the pair of North Vietnamese aircraft fired a second rocket from a distance of 1500-1800 meters, which exploded under the trailing F-4 aircraft. The American aircraft burst into flames and fell into the jungle on the south slope of the Tam-Dao mountain range, 40 km from Noi-Bai. The rocket was fired at a speed of 1200 kph and at an altitude of 3500 meters.

23 August 1967, a group of eight F-105 aircraft flying from the direction of Laos towards Tuen-Kuang was intercepted by a pair of MiG-21 fighters. The intercept occurred 10 minutes after takeoff at an altitude of 4000 meters. The leader of the pair of MiGs decided to attack the trailing flight of enemy aircraft, but at this time the wingman radioed that a group of 12 F-4 aircraft were following behind and 1000 meters below him. The North Vietnamese fighters turned to the right allowing the enemy aircraft to fly past them, then turning to the left flew into their rear hemisphere. The combat formation of the American aircraft consisted of columns of flights with a distance of 3 km between them. Each flight was formed into a "wedge" formation. The distance between the trailing F-105 aircraft and the lead F-4 consisted of about 10 km. The American fliers evidently did not notice the MiGs and continued on course at a speed of 800 kph.

TFR 210-24

Occupying an attack attitude, the North Vietnamese Fliers in a "front" formation started to close using afterburners. Turning to the right and descending, they attacked the trailing flight of F-4 aircraft. Rockets were fired at an altitude of 5200 meters, at a speed of mach 1.2-1.3, from a distance of 1800-1500 meters (first rocket) and 800 meters (second rocket). Both rockets hit their targets and two F-4s were shot down. After the first rocket was fired, the North Vietnamese fighter turned 15-20 degrees more to the right and flying above the trailing flight attacked, firing another rocket, and shot down the second aircraft - the wingman of the second pair of the lead flight. The second rocket was fired from a distance of 1500-1200 meters, at a speed of mach 1,2 and at an altitude of 500 meters. In both instances a PKI sight was used. The leader of the pair of Vietnamese aircraft broke off the attack by turning right with a 60% dive. The wingman made a combat turn climbing to an altitude of 10,000 meters. Breaking off the attack after a short delay, the wingman flew into an area filled with rocket fragments from the F-4 aircraft. As a result of this the aircraft was slightly damaged. Both DRV fliers landed safely at their airfield.

31 August 1967 at 0935, a pair of MiG-21s took off from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept an American reconnaissance aircraft which was flying from the direction of Laos towards Viet-Chi. Executing a command from the TsKP, the North Vietnamese fliers climbed to an altitude of 6,000 meters and soon detected two RF-4 aircraft ahead and 100-1500 meters beneath them, which were flying on a course of 260-280 degrees in an echelon formation. The leader of the pair of North Vietnamese aircraft ordered his wingman to attack the RF-4 wingman, he himself went after the leader. The American wingman, apparently having noticed the MiG aircraft turned and descended. Flying low over the jungle, he disappeared against the jungle background. The leader continued his flight with energetic heading and altitude maneuvers. After approaching the enemy aircraft to a distance of 2.5 km, the DRV flier aimed using an RP-21 and fired the first rocket. At that time the altitude was 4500 meters and the air speed was mach 1.2. The rocket exploded near the aircraft, which continued its flight in a westerly direction with a straight in descent. Continuing the pursuit, the North Vietnamese flier fired a second rocket from a distance of 1500-1800 meters, at an altitude of 3000 meters and air speed of 1100 kph. As a result of the

explosion of the second rocket, the RF-4 aircraft rolled over upside down, burst into flames and augured into the ground at a 60-70 degree angle.

10 September 1967, two MiG-21s were scramble to intercept an American aircraft flying from En-Bai to Fu-To. The American aircraft flew over Viet-Chi and continued on towards Noi-Bai airfield.

TFR 210-25

The lead MiG-21, separated from his wingman, engaged an American aircraft, identified visually as an F-4, alone and after locking on the target with a R-3s heat-seeking missile, shot down the F-4 at a distance of 1500 meters and an altitude of 7500 meters.

16 September 1967, a group of enemy aircraft were detected over Hoi-Suan (105 km southwest of Hanoi) heading towards Van-En (120 km west of Hanoi). A pair of MiG-21s were scrambled to intercept. After flying over Van-En, the American aircraft started following the Hanoi-Lao Kai railroad line and headed south after reaching the Bao-Ma station. The MiG-21s intercepted the American aircraft apparently without being detected. The wing MiG-21 fired an R-3s missile at the leader of a pair of RF-101s. The missile hit the tail section of the RF-101 and exploded. The RF-101 fell 25 km northwest of Muong-Hung. The pilot ejected and was taken prisoner. The lead MiG-21 then tried to attack the second RF-101, but could not lock on target. His wingman fired an R-3s missile, which exploded under the right wing of the second RF-101 setting the aircraft ablaze.

TFR 210-26

On the second day after this air battle, the pilot of an RF-4 from the US 432nd Reconnaissance Wing based in Thailand, shot down by DRV AAA, was captured. The captured pilot testified that on 16 September 1967 two RF-101s from his squadron failed to return from its mission. One of the RF-101 pilots who ejected and landed near the Vietnamese Laotian border was rescued by helicopter. The other RF-101 pilot was considered to be KIA.

26 September 1967, a pair of MiG-21s were scrambled to intercept a group of American F-4 aircraft which were flying from the direction of Laos towards Tuen-Kuang. The DRV MiG pilots intercepted a group of 8 F-4 aircraft in the area of En-Bai. The lead MiG-21 fired a R-3s missile at the trailing F-4. The missile exploded under the F-4, which burst into flames and fell into the jungle 20 km southeast of Tuen-Kuang.

29 September 1967, an air battle took place between two MiG-21s (scrambled to intercept) and F-4B carrier-based fighters from the direction of the Gulf of Tonkin towards Kam-Fa. The MiG-21s intercepted the F-4 aircraft without being noticed. The lead MiG-21, after achieving target lock with an RP-21, fired a rocket at the left wingman of a flight of F-4 aircraft. The rocket exploded under the F-4, which burst into flames and fell.

TFR 210-27

30 September 1967 at 1510, a pair MiG-21 aircraft were scrambled from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept a group of American aircraft flying from the direction of Tonkin Bay across Kam-Fa in the direction of Kep station. The DRV MiG-21 engaged F-105 aircraft which were bombing the Kep airfield and railway station. One F-105 was shot down and crashed 15 km southeast of Kep.

3 October 1967 at 1100 hrs, MiG-17s were scrambled from Gia-Lam airfield to intercept a group of enemy aircraft bombing railway bridges in the area of Hai Duong. The MiG-17s exited the cloud cover in the area of the Great Hanoi Bridge over the Red River where they two RF-101 aircraft 1500 meters above them. The enemy reconnaissance aircraft, apparently not expecting an attack, flew over the Noi-Bai airfield and continued flying towards Tuen-Kuang increasing altitude. 40-50 km from Noi-Bai airfield the RF-101 aircraft

noticed the MiGs and broke formation. The MiG flight commander and his wingman overtook and shot down the leader of the pair of RF-101 aircraft 20 km northwest of Fu-To, expending 57-37mm and 190-23mm shells. The leader of the second pair of MiGs overtook and shot down the RF-101 wingman 25-30 km south of Tuen-Kuang, expending 44-37mm and 180-23mm shells.

TFR 210-28

3 October 1967 at 1348 hrs, a pair of MiG-21 aircraft were scrambled from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept two US reconnaissance aircraft which were flying from the direction of Tonkin Bay across Hong Gai and Hai Duong at an altitude of 7000 meters towards Hanoi. When the aircraft were 25-30 km from Hanoi active ECM prevented ground-based guidance of the MiGs to the target. The North Vietnamese MiGs were ordered to 7500 meters to visually search for the targets. At 1354 hours, after following these instructions, four enemy aircraft were visually sighted following southwesterly course. One American F-4 aircraft was shot down 30-40 km from the Laotian border.

TFR 210-29

7 October 1967, a pair of MiG-21s were scramble from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept a group of US F-4 aircraft.

An F-4 was hit by an air-to-air missile, burst into flames and fell 30 km west of Hoa-Lak airfield. A second F-4 was hit by an R-3s missile and fell 20 km west of Hoa-Lak airfield.

TFR 210-30

9 October 1967, a pair of MiG-21s were scrambled from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept a group of 16 F-105 aircraft flying from the direction of Laos across En-Chau towards En-Bai. The DRV aircraft were warned of another group of 8 F-4 aircraft flying 10 km behind the F-105s.

Both pilots broke off the attack and climbed to an altitude of 8,000 meters. They witnessed how the enemy aircraft conducted the bombing in a disorderly fashion and flew to the southwest.

16 January 1968, eight American F-4C aircraft appeared coming from Laos. The group was cruising at 3,500 meters and were deployed in an echelon right combat formation. Medium intensity radio interference was observed.

A pair of MiG-21 aircraft were scrambled to intercept the enemy aircraft. The command was received from the command post: "The target is to the left and ahead at a range of 15 km, turn on your afterburners". The pilots then sighted the flight of American F-4C aircraft on an intercept course. The flight leader conducted a maneuver and approached the enemy formation from the rear hemisphere of the lead pair of F-4C aircraft. He fired a R-3s missile from a range of 1,800 meters and hit the target. The aircraft exploded. During the attack, the second pair of American aircraft approached the rear of the lead pair of MiGs in order to conduct an attack. After receiving a warning from his wingman, the North Vietnamese pilot conducted several evasive maneuvers and headed out on a course back to the airfield. The wingman attempted to attack the enemy. However, due to the high rate of closure, he broke off the attack, gained altitude, and left. The aerial battle was characterized by a good deal of interaction between the pair and the provision of accurate combat situation information which allowed the North Vietnamese pilot to evade enemy fire.

23 February 1968 at 0642, a single DRV MiG-21 took off from Noj-Baj. He was ordered to attack a group of 12 American F-4C aircraft, approaching from the Gulf of Tonkin at an altitude of 4,000 - 5,000 meters with the intent of conducting an air strike on the Kep

airfield. There was total cloud cover that day. (The altitude of the lower edge of the cloud cover: 700 meters, upper edge: 2,200 meters), visibility was 12 - 15 km.

The pilot detected the formation of F-4C aircraft at a range of 12 km. The F-4C aircraft were in a "column of twos" formation. He turned on his afterburner and closed on the American aircraft. When the pair was 4 km from his position, they conducted a "scissors" maneuver. The North Vietnamese pilot launched a missile when the F-4 was at a range of 1,500 meters and it hit the lead aircraft of the second pair. The American aircraft caught fire and crashed into the ground. The North Vietnamese pilot broke off the attack and at 0714 hours returned to his airfield with 700 liters of fuel remaining. During this battle, the central command post carried out the command and control functions in an environment of weak radio interference. Due to the fact that the alert aircraft received the scramble order late, the fighter did not engage the enemy aircraft until after they had conducted the air strike on Kep airfield.

7 May 1968 at 1420 hours, the alert pair of MiG-21 aircraft was scrambled to intercept an A-3D aircraft, cruising at an altitude of 500 meters and approaching from Tan'kho.

TFR 210-31

After taking off from the Noj-Baj airfield, the pilots broke through the cloud cover and climbed to 10,000 meters. The North Vietnamese pilots detected the enemy aircraft visually at a distance of 12 km and approached it from the rear and above. The leader fired a R-3s missile at a range of 1,200 meters and shot down the enemy aircraft. Following a 54 minute flight, the pilots landed back at their airfield with a reserve of 400 liters in their fuel tanks.

TFR 210-32

23 August 1967 at 1455 hours, a flight of MiG-17 aircraft took off from the airfield at Noj-Baj to fly a combat air patrol (CAP) mission over it. The pilots were Korean. The aircraft shot down one F-105, which had flown into their sector at an altitude of 700 meters. At 1522 hours, the flight commander and his wingman attacked a pair of F-4 aircraft, which were pursuing a MiG-17. The flight commander closed on the wingman of the American formation and fired approximately 70% of his combat load on the enemy aircraft. The enemy aircraft caught fire and attempted to maneuver out of the area and fly toward the Tam-Dao mountain ridge. The aircraft crashed into a mountain near that ridge. The other American aircraft broke off and flew back towards Laos.

14 January 1968 at 1530 hours, a MiG-21, piloted by a Korean flier, took off from the airfield at Noj-Baj to intercept a flight of American F-4C fighters. The Korean pilot observed the American fighters flying in a wedge formation. He attacked the lead aircraft of the second pair with a R-3s missile. The American pilot attempted to evade the missile but was unsuccessful. The missile downed the aircraft. The Korean pilot broke off the attack and returned to the airfield at Noj-Baj at 1605 hours.

12 February 1968 at 1526 hours, a pair of MiG-21 aircraft, piloted by Korean fliers, scrambled from the Noj-Baj airfield to intercept a flight of 12 F-4H aircraft. The flight of F-4H aircraft were cruising at an altitude of 4,500 - 7,000 meters and traveling from the Gulf of Tonkin toward Tien-En and Dinh-Lap. The wingman reported that he saw four F-4 aircraft below and to the left of his position and three F-4 aircraft below him. The wingman shot down one enemy aircraft. As he attempted to break off after the attack, he was attacked by a group of three F-4 aircraft. The Korean pilot ejected from his damaged aircraft and the Americans shot and killed him as he descended by parachute.

TFR 210-33

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TFR 210-34 No information.

TFR 210-35 Volume 5

TFR 210-36 21 January, a pair of MiG-21 aircraft took off on command from the central command post to destroy three American helicopters. The command post guided the aircraft to the targets and reported that the helicopters also had aircraft providing top cover for them. The MiGs sighted a pair of F-4 aircraft. In order to evade the enemy attack, the leader engaged his afterburner. The wingman remained behind. He sighted a single F-4 and, with permission from his leader, attacked and downed the enemy aircraft. However, he was then attacked and downed by the second F-4.

The remaining MiG spotted the helicopters and attacked the closest one with a R-3s missile. The missile hit the target and the helicopter went down. The MiG received the command to break off the attack and return to base from the command post.

TFR 210-37 Volume 6

TFR 210-38 Repelling enemy air raids, on this day the country's air defense units shot down seven aircraft (according to data of the VNA Command), including three B-52 bombers and one F-111A fighter. 69 anti-aircraft rockets were fired.

TFR 210-39 30 carrier-based aircraft attacked various targets in the Haiphong area from 1900-2200 hrs. Tactical aviation assets attacked other targets in the Quang Bin Province. 19 December 1972, PVO troops shot down 6 enemy aircraft (two B-52 bombers near Hanoi and four naval aircraft above Haiphong).

20 December 1972, American aircraft flew 336 sorties above the DRV (266 of them being night sorties). 93 B-52s and 8 helicopters participated in the raids. There were three massed raids on Hanoi:

- from 0500-0545, 12 B-52s, 16 F-4 and F-105 fighters attacked Dong-An' and Ien-Vien railroad stations.
- from 1250-1310 hrs, more than 40 tactical aviation aircraft carried out repeat raids of the above plus Zak-La and Khoa-Lak.
- from 1925-2100 hrs, 33 B-52 bombers and 32 tactical aircraft attacked targets near Za-Lam, Hanoi, V'et-Chi and Ien-Vien. F-111A aircraft attacked the Bat'-Mai airport, PVO positions from Kim-Lien to Bon-Don (on the left bank of the Red River, south of Za-Lam) and warehouses southwest of Hanoi. 45 B-52 "Flying Fortresses" and 90 tactical aircraft operated near the capital on this day. 80 sorties were flown near Haiphong by mainly naval aircraft on this day.
- from 0030-0100 hrs 30 A-6 and A-7 aircraft attacked targets in and around Haiphong.
- from 0430-0543 hrs 10 A-6s attacked Haiphong port.
- from 1755-1840 hrs 10 A-6s attacked the Kien-An crossing targets south of Haiphong.
- from 2220-0040 hrs on 21 December 1972, nearly 30 aircraft attacked targets around Kat-Bi.
- from 2345-0030 on 21 December 1972, there was a mass raid on Bak-Zang (Ha-Bak Province) by 18 B-52 bombers. There were two massed raids on targets near Kao-Hgai:
- from 0430-0600 hrs, 12 B-52s and 12 F-4 and F-105 fighters.
- from 2345-0115 hrs, 18 B-52 bombers and 30 F-4 and F-111A. Single aircraft and small groups attacked targets in the En-Baj region and in Nge-An, Ha-Bak and Nam-Ha

TFR 210-40

provinces. Single F-111A aircraft attacked Hanoi in 25-30 minute intervals between the massed raids.

Naval helicopters made four raids on Khon-La Island. PVO troops shot down 13 enemy aircraft, including four B-52 bombers. VNA fighter aircraft were unable to participate in combat aircraft operations.

21 December 1972, American aircraft flew 190 sorties above DRV territory (80 at night), including 21 B-52 sorties. For the 24-hour period, there were two massed raids on Hanoi lasting one hour and 45 minutes:

- from 0445-0530 hrs, 21 B-52 bombers and up to 40 tactical aircraft (including F-111As) attacked targets in Noi-Bai, Dong-An, Za-Lam and Hanoi.
- from 1230-1330 hrs nearly 60 F-4 and F-105 aircraft attacked targets in Hanoi, Noi-Bai, Bat-Mai and Za-Lam. One of the targets hit was a jail holding captive American fliers (some of whom were injured). Nine naval aircraft attacked targets near Haiphong at 0340 and 1820 hrs.

For the 24-hour period F-111As attacked targets in or near Za-Lam, Hanoi, Tu-Din, Quan-Nhan, Fa-Den, Dong-An, Noi-Bai and Dyk-Zang. Other types of tactical aircraft attacked Hanoi, Haiphong, Fu-Li, Viet-Chi and other targets in the 4th military zone. During combat operations, VNA anti-aircraft rocket troops shot down nine American aircraft (three B-52s, three F-111As, one A-7, one A-6, one F-4 and one RA-5C). VNA fighter aircraft were unable to participate.

TFR 210-41

Two MiG-21 aircraft scrambled from Noi-Bai and Za-Lam, but had radar problems and did not engage in combat.

22 December 1972, American aircraft flew 154 sorties above North Vietnam (75 of them at night), including 21 B-52 sorties.

In the 24-hour period there were two massed raids:

- from 0300-0420, 21 B-52 bombers and 19 tactical aircraft attacked Hanoi.
- from 1330-1430 hrs, 48 F-4 and F-105 fighters attacked Viet-Chi.

Tactical aircraft, including F-111As, attacked Hanoi, Haiphong, Ha-Tin, En-Bai, and targets in Ha-Bak, Hai-Hyng, Than-Hoa, Quang Bin and Bin-Lin. During combat, anti-aircraft troops shot down four American aircraft (three B-52s and one F-111A). Two MiG-21s scrambled (one was shot down, the pilot ejected). On 23 December 72, US aircraft flew 150 sorties above the DRV (70 of them at night), including 18 B-52 sorties. For the 24-hour period, there were two massed attacks:

- from 0526-0630 hrs, 18 B-52 bombers attacked targets in Haiphong.
- from 1345-1430 hrs, 44 F-4 and F-105 attacked the road to Shon-Tai. Tactical aircraft, in singles and small groups attacked targets in Dong-Hoi, Ti-Long, Dong-Mo and various targets in Ha-Tei, Nam-Ha, Quang-Nin, Thai-Bin, Hai-Hing and Quang-Bin. In repelling the attacks, anti-aircraft rocket troops shot down two B-52 bombers. VNA fighter aviation scrambled four MiG-21s from Noi-Bai. A pair of MiG-21s engaged in aerial combat with four F-4s and shot down one enemy aircraft without friendly losses. 24 December 1972, American aircraft flew 173 sorties (of these, 151 were at night), including 36 B-52 sorties. There were two massed attacks:

- from 1130-1230 hrs, 28 tactical aircraft attacked targets near Thai-Ngyuen.
- from 1918-2037 hrs 36 B-52 bombers attacked Kep and Thai-Ngyuen. Single aircraft and small groups conducted bombing and strafing attacks throughout this period. In

TFR 210-42

particular, a single F-111A bombed Port Fa-Den. Two A-6s attacked -Son Island and Hon-Me. Two F-4 fighters bombed Li-Hoa pass and Quan-Khau pass on Highway 1.

Anti-aircraft troops destroyed three American aircraft in the course of combat operations, including a B-52 strategic bomber. VNA fighter aircraft did not participate due to poor weather conditions.

25 December 1972, the Americans did not bomb North Vietnam due to the Christmas holiday. There were 18 aerial reconnaissance flights (including two SR-71s and four reconnaissance drones). Anti-aircraft troops and VNA fighter aviation did not engage in combat on this day.

26 December 1972, after a 36-hour lull, the bombing of the DRV resumed. 227 aircraft participated in the sorties (173 of them at night), including 63 B-52 bombers.

There were two massed raids on Hanoi:

- from 1315-1450 hrs, 50 tactical aircraft attacked targets in the city and Dong-An RR Station.
- from 2200-2315 hrs, wings of B-52 bombers made 12 attacks on targets throughout the city.
- from 2210-2300 hrs, 15 B-52 bombers and 20 tactical aircraft attacked targets near Haiphong.
- from 2200-2250 hrs, 12 B-52 bombers bombed various targets near Thai-Ngyuen. For the 24-hour period, VNA anti-aircraft troops shot down nine aircraft, including eight B-52 bombers (five over Hanoi, two over Haiphong and one near Thai-Ngyuen). 27 December 1972, 372 sorties were flown by American aircraft (105 of them at night), including 51 B-52 sorties. There were three massed raids on the central and northern provinces:
 - from 1330-1430 hrs, tactical aircraft attacked Hanoi (eight F-4s attacked the radio station and the suburbs) and Haiphong (24 A-6s and A-7s bombed and strafed the port, where one ship was sunk and two were damaged, the Kien-An airfield, machine and concrete factories, living quarters in the area of the railroad station) and Kha Dong, where the theater, military camp and inhabited suburbs were subjected to attack.
 - from 1555-1635 hrs, tactical aviation (36 F-4 and F-105 fighters) raided the city of Tu-Liem (10 km west of Hanoi).
 - from 2230-2335 hrs, 51 B-52 bombers and 100 tactical aviation fighters struck Hanoi and its environs. The bombers hit the rail stations at Dong-An' and Ien-Bien, the Za-Lam airfield, the crossing at the Red River and inhabited suburbs. More than 10 industrial and apartment buildings were destroyed and the Za-Lam airfield was put out of commission.

TFR 210-43

In the 4th Military district, tactical aviation worked in single ship formations or in small groups hitting the rail station at Kuan-Khan', the [island?] of Khon-Me, bridges, river crossings, fords on Highways 1 and 15, troop concentrations, supply lines, and inhabited areas of the provinces of Tkhan'-Khoa, Nge-An, Kha-Tin', and Kuang-Bien. Anti-aircraft forces used 33 missiles during the 24 hour period and shot down 4 B-52s in the Hanoi area. AAA shot down one F-4. There were 5 MiG-21 sorties from Noi-Bai and Kep airfields that shot down one B-52 and two F-4s. 28 December 1972, the USAF conducted 369 flights over North Vietnam of which 244 were at night. 78 of these flights were by B-52s.

There were three mass raids on the central provinces:

- from 0700-0745 hrs, 40 F-4s and F-105s attacked anti-aircraft assets in the Kha-Tej, Khoa-Bin', Nin'-Bin' and the Khoa-Bin' electricity works.
- from 1230-1340 hrs, 60 F-4s and F-105 attacked Hanoi and anti-aircraft assets in the Hanoi area, bridges, river ports, rail stations, factories, warehouses, irrigation facilities, and dwellings.
- from 2140-2235 hrs, 78 B-52s supported by 144 tactical aviation aircraft struck Hanoi, Dong-Mo, and roads in the province of Kuang-Bin'. In the Hanoi area they attacked rail stations, river crossings, living quarters, and inhabited suburbs. In Dong-Mo they attacked living quarters and the rail station. In the province of Kuang-Bin' they attacked highways 12, 15, 20.

TFR 210-44

Single F-111s, at night and at low altitude attacked the Kep airfield, the city of Bak-Zang, the electricity works in Tkhaj-Nguen, and a number of inhabited areas in the central part of the country. In the 4th military district, tactical aviation for the 24 hour period in single ship and small formations attacked troop concentrations, supply lines at river crossings, bridges, mountain passes, and inhabited areas.

In the 24 hour period, SAMs shot down 4 aircraft to include one B-52. They used a total of 15 missiles. Fighter Aviation sortied three MiG-21 flights from Noi-Bai that shot down one B-52, one F-4, and one RA-5C.

29 December 1972, American aircraft conducted 206 flights over North Vietnam, of which 145 were at night. There were 48 B-52 sorties. In the center and northern area of the country there were two mass raids:

- from 0930-1015 hrs, 40 F-4s and F-105s attacked troop concentrations, supplies at the junction of Highways 3 and 13a and inhabited areas northwest of Tkhaj-Nguen.
- from 2200-2315 hrs, 33 B-52 supported by 80 tactical aircraft bombed inhabited areas northeast of Tkhaj-Nguen, in the area of the Dong-Mo rail station, and the suburbs of Hanoi. 30-40 minutes after this ended, up to 18 F-111As in single ship formations bombed the same areas.

For the rest of the 24 hour period, single ship and small formations of tactical aircraft hit targets in the Khoa-Bin', Kha-Tin', Nam-Kha, Hanoi, and Kuang-Bin' provinces. Separate cells of B-52 bombers bombed targets in the Kuang-Bin' province. Helicopters performed search and rescue and one of them was shot down by ground troops.

Missile forces expended 6 missiles and shot down 4 aircraft to include one B-52. Fighter aviation launched four sorties from Noi-Bai without results.

TFR 210-45

According to incomplete data, American air crew losses reached 100, of which more than 15 were KIA and the rest are MIA/POW.

TFR 210-46

18 December 1971, three pairs of MiG-21PFL aircraft were scrambled from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept six F-4 Phantom-2 aircraft detected crossing the DVR-Laotian border. An F-4 was hit by an R-3s missile and fell 120 km southwest of Noi-Bai airfield. Two American fliers (a major and a lieutenant) ejected and were taken prisoner. The rest of the American aircraft retreated across the Laotian border.

TFR 210-47

19 January 1972, a pair of North Vietnamese MiG-21PFL aircraft were scrambled to intercept an RF-101. The RF-101 was hit by a missile fired by one of the MiGs, which destroyed the tail section of the RF-101.

TFR 210-48 6 March 1972, a pair of MiG-17PS aircraft were scrambled from Kep airfield to destroy two American aircraft.

TFR 210-49 The formation leader conducted evasive maneuvers and gained altitude. The wingman trailed his leader. He spotted an F-4 and shot it down. The leader came out of his evasive maneuver and was shot down by the second F-4. At the command of the central command post, a second pair of MiG-21 aircraft were sent the area of the aerial engagement. The American flier, sighting the additional MiG-21s, broke off the attack and flew off in the direction of the Gulf of Tonkin.

Later, a flight of four American A-7 bomber/ground attack aircraft, with top cover from a flight of F-4 aircraft, were sent to bomb a North Vietnamese airfield. At this time, a RA-5C, with top cover provided by a pair of F-4 aircraft, was conducting ESM operations while flying along the border of the DRV and Laos. A pair of MiG-21 aircraft was scrambled to repulse the air strike. The wingman of the MiG formation was the first to spot the enemy aircraft and fired two missiles. One pair of A-7 aircraft noticed the missiles and turned toward the shoreline. The other pair, covered by a pair of F-4 aircraft, continued on and completed their mission. Four 250 kg bombs knocked out the metal VPP.

The leader of the pair of MiG-21s left the battle because he did not detect any enemy aircraft and his wingman soon followed. A neighboring airfield scrambled a pair of MiG-21s and a pair of MiG-17 aircraft. The MiG-21s took up a DFP over their airfield at an altitude of 4,000 - 4,500 meters. The pair of MiG-17 aircraft proceeded to the area where the American ground attack aircraft were operating. The MiG-17s spotted the F-4 aircraft conducting top cover and used their advantageous position (to the rear and below the enemy aircraft) to start an attack run. The MiG-17s fired their cannons at a range of 300 - 500 meters. Two F-4 aircraft were shot down as a result of the attack.

TFR 210-50 27 April 1972 at 1613, a pair of MiG-21 and MiG-17 aircraft took off to intercept several groups of American aircraft which were detected 100 kms east of Than'-Khoa. The MiG-17 was sent to conduct a CAP over Hanoi and the MiG-21s conducted CAP over the airfield.

TFR 210-51 The regimental CP radar station detected four enemy aircraft 10 km south of the airfield. The MiG-21s visually acquired two F-4s, one was hit by an air-to-air missile and the pilot ejected.

TFR 210-52 10 May 1972, while fighting off attacks in the cities of Haiphong and Khe Song, the VNA conducted 64 operational flights (18 MiG-21s, 8 MiG-19s, 38 MiG-17s) and carried out 15 air battles in which 7 F-4s were shot down (3 by MiG-21s, 3 by MiG-19s and one by a MiG-17). We lost 5 aircraft in these battles - 2 MiG-21s (one flier died and the other ejected) and 1 MiG-19 (the flier ejected).

Another characteristic battle of the day was while fighting off attacks at Khe Song. A MiG-17 was sent up to intercept the enemy, which at an altitude of 300-400m shot down an F-4.

TFR 210-53 2 MiG-17s were shot down (one flier dead, the other ejected).

To augment the MiG-17 a pair of MiG-21s were scrambled from a neighboring airfield. They flew up to the F-4s and at a range of 2 km and fired a rocket which shot down both aircraft.

11 May 1972, while fighting off an attack in Hanoi a pair of MiG-21s took off from an area 40-50 km north-west of Hanoi climbing to an altitude of 8000m to distract the enemy fighters. At the same time, another pair, flying at a low altitude towards the south were following a enemy aircraft.

A formation of F-4s flew near a pair of MiG-21s at a high altitude. They were 2-3 km away from the F-4s and therefore only saw the lead pair. They turned on the afterburners and attacked the F-4s from below. The lead man fired one rocket and the wingman fired another rocket which shot down one of the F-4s. While looking for his lead man, the MiG-21 did not notice the 2nd pair of F-4s and who fired 4 rockets at him and shot him down. The flier ejected.

18 May 1972 American aircraft conducted more than 270 operational flights in various areas of DRV. The VNA made 26 flights to fight them off (8 MiG-21s, 6 MiG-19, 12 MiG-17s) and carried out 8 air battles in which 3 "Phantoms" were shot down and no losses to VNA aircraft.

In particular, from 1130-1215 hours, 40 F-4s conducted massive strikes of various areas in Hanoi. A formation of North Vietnamese MiG-21s scrambled from Hoj-Baj airfield, under the command of TSKP to fight off the attackers. Within several minutes the MiGs fulfilled their mission and attacked 8 F-4s in the zone of the air patrol.

TFR 210-54

The North Vietnamese pair launched a guided missile and made a direct hit into a F-4. The wingman shot down another F-4 and the remaining American fighters retreated.

On the same day a pair of MiG-21s battled a formation of F-4s. The F-4s tried out a new tactical vertical maneuver but the Vietnamese caught on and were unaffected by it. No aircraft from either side were shot down.

12 June 1972 a pair of MiG-21s were scrambled to interdict 24 enemy aircraft at Laos and 16 F-4 Naval aircraft at the Gulf of Tonkin. An F-4 was shot down by a rocket.

TFR 210-55

13 June 1972 at 0845 hrs, 3 groups of American aircraft were discovered southwest of Hanoi where it borders with Laos in the Tkhan'-Khoa province.

2 pairs of MiG-21s were scrambled at 0902 hours from an airfield in Khoj-Baj. The 1st pair flew 50 km north-west of Hanoi and the 2nd pair went to the north of that.

0913 hours the 1st pair of MiG-21s flew to F-Tho and discovered 4 F-4s. They fired a rocket at one F-4 that exploded and crashed in the area of Khoa-Lak airfield.

The 2nd pair of fighters was told to return home because of a lack of fuel. On the way back they discovered a group of F-4s in front of them. The MiG-21s fired rockets and one F-4 exploded. The pilot of the F-4 ejected and was taken prisoner. The remaining 3 F-4 fighters took off towards the Gulf of Tonkin. In this battle 2 F-4s were shot down by 3 R-3s.

5 July 1972, 60-70 kms southwest of Hanoi, a group of enemy aircraft in a column of pairs and flying at an altitude of 3000-5000 meters was detected. Two MiG-21s from Noi-Bai were launched, one of the MiGs returned to base due to radio malfunction. A second pair was launched. The North Vietnamese pilots visually detected the flight of F-4 fighters, released their drop tanks and on afterburner (1100 km/hr) closed in on the trail pair of F-4s. At a distance of 1000-1500 meters the pilots fired R-3s rockets (2 each). Both targets were shot down. After the attack, the pilots returned to base.

TFR 210-56

Two F-4s were shot down, four R-3s rockets were expended, evaluation of [Vietnamese] pilots' performance. On 8 July 1972, 50-60 kilometers southwest of Hanoi, a group of enemy aircraft was detected. A pair of MiG-21s was launched from Za-Lam airfield. The lead pair detected a group of 8 F-4s from a distance of 15 kms and at an altitude of 2000-2500 meters. The F-4s were in combat formation 'column of flights' 2-3 kms from one another and escheloned at an altitude (illustration 72). At a distance of 10-12 kms from the target, the wingman detected another group of eight F-4s following the first group at a distance of 3-5 kms. The pair leader commanded the wingman to attack the second group of eight and launched an R-3s rocket (the target was not destroyed). At that time, the wingman of the North Vietnamese pair approached the second group of F-4s and at a distance of 1.5 kms from the target launched an R-3s rocket at the Tail End Charlie and shot him down. After which, the [wingman] disengaged.

TFR 210-57

24 July 1972, 75 kms southwest of Hanoi a group of enemy aircraft was detected. A pair of MiG-21s was launched from Noi-Bai. Two minutes after the first pair took off, another pair of MiG-21s was launched from Za-Lam airfield (illustration 73). The first pair engaged in battle in the rear half of the tail flight of the enemy group which consisted of 12 F-4 aircraft. The pair released their drop tanks and on afterburner (1100 km/hr) attacked the wingman of the pair of the tail flight of F-4s. The pair fired three R-3s rockets. As a result, two aircraft of the wing pair were shot down. In this battle, North Vietnamese fighters shot down 3 F-4 aircraft (expending six R-3s rockets) with no friendly losses. Evaluation of combat action given. The aerial combat success was enabled by:

- absence of jamming
- concealed approach of the fighters
- timely target engagement

26 August 1972, VNA fighter aircraft flew 16 combat sorties (twelve MiG-21 sorties and four MiG-17 sorties) from Noi-Bai and En-Bai Airfields. In one engagement, the lead pair of MiG-21s shot down an American F-4 over Vin-Fu Province. At the same time, a pair of MiG-21s shot down another F-4 over Ha-Tai Province. Later that day, North Vietnamese pilots in MiG-17s shot down a reconnaissance drone near Hanoi.

TFR 210-58

7 October 1972, a pair of MiG-21PFL aircraft were scrambled to intercept a formation of F-4s heading towards the Noi-Bai airfield. Two flights of F-4s were visually detected and engaged. As a result of this combat, the number 1 and 4 aircraft of the second flight were shot down. The number 2 MiG then recovered at Za-Lam airfield. The lead MiG then proceeded to attack and shoot down the number 3 F-4 of the second flight.

12 October 1972, two MiG-21PFLs were scrambled from Noi-Bai to intercept a group of F-4s. Having visually acquired three flights of F-4s, they attack the trail flight. The last F-4 of the third flight was shot down. The lead MiG recovered at Noi-Bai. The second MiG pilot ejected from his aircraft after he entered into the cloud cover and lost his orientation.

TFR 210-59

23 December 1972, two MiG-21s were scrambled from Noi-Bai.

TFR 210-60	<p>The MiG pair detected a flight of F-4s and shot down the number 4 aircraft. They then recovered at Noi-Bai airfield.</p> <p>27 December 1972, two MiG-21s were scrambled from Noi-Bai to intercept a group of tactical aircraft in heavy jamming conditions. The wingman of the MiGs detected a pair of F-4s, launched two missiles and shot down the lead F-4. A minimum of one of the air crew of the F-4 ejected. The MiGs recovered at Noi-Bai.</p> <p>At night on 27 December 1972, a lone MiG-21 was scrambled from En-Bai to intercept a group of B-52s. Using ground controlled intercept and acquiring a B-52 visually (pilot stated that the B-52 had 4 white navigation lights on), the pilot launched a pair of missiles which struck the B-52. The fate of the B-52 is unknown. The MiG-21 recovered at En-Bai.</p>
TFR 210-61	<p>28 December 1972, a pair of MiG-21 aircraft was scrambled from Noi-Bai airfield to intercept a group of enemy tactical fighters and to prevent them from attacking Hanoi. An F-4 and an RA-5C were shot down and the pilots of these aircraft were captured.</p>
TFR 210-62	<p>9 June 1972, a helicopter was shot in the area of the central plateau. The leader of the American advisors in the II Corps operations area, Dzhon Vehnn, was on board this downed helicopter.</p> <p>9 July 1972, American General R. Tomlehn died under similar conditions. A week later, the commander of the South Vietnamese 4th Air Division, Brigadier General Nguen Hyui Anh, and others. [rest of page not provided]</p>
TFR 210-63	<p><u>Volume 7</u></p>
TFR 210-64	<p>No information</p>
TFR 234-1-2	<p>Two page document dated 17 April 1968 addressed to Leonid Brezhnev from the Minister of Defense Andrej Grechko reporting on a shoot down of a US F-111 over Hanoi by a "Divina" SA-75M SAM on 30 March 68. Reports that the F-111 crashed outside of North Vietnam and that a search is underway to located the downed aircraft. After the crash is located, the effectiveness of the "Divina" can be better assessed if the North Vietnamese allow the Soviets access to the crash.</p>
TFR 235-1-3	<p>Extract from the diary of I.S. Shcherbakov for 3 January 1970. Reports on a meeting with Nguyen Ko Tkhat' at which the Chief of the Vietnamese People's Army, Fung Tkhe Taj, was present. Issues discussed were Soviet support for the upcoming trip to Cambodia by the North Vietnamese Prime Minister, Pham Van Dong. The Vietnamese thanked the Soviets for this support as well as for supporting the North Vietnamese position at the International Red Cross conference in Istanbul, where the issue of US conduct of the war and POWs was apparently discussed. The North Vietnamese referred to the 1949 Geneva Convention and maintain that captured American pilots are not prisoners [of war], but are military criminals and not subject to protection under the Geneva Convention. The humane and lenient policy of North Vietnam however, provides for treatment of these captured Americans. They are provided with medical attention, are fed the same as North Vietnamese, and are allowed to conduct correspondence. States that there are no published lists of American prisoners. States that the delegation of American women who recently visited North Vietnam, were given over 100 postcards and were told the names of five Americans who died in captivity. The North Vietnamese are in favor of resolving the American POW issue in accordance with paragraph 9 of the "Global Resolution of the</p>

South Vietnamese Problem”, which was proposed by the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam. Reports that American Millionaire Perot has offered to rebuild schools, hospitals, and temples that were destroyed by US bombing in exchange for the release of American POWs. The Vietnamese did not reject outright Perot’s offer, but maintained the issue must be resolved in accordance with Paragraph 9 of the Global resolution.

- TFR 236-1 Cover letter for the rest of this TFR dated 29 March 1968 to the Central Committee of the Communist Part of the Soviet Union from Yu. Chepyzhev, Secretary of the Soviet Committee for Defense of Peace that forwards notes from an unofficial conversation with Konaka [Kanaka] who was a member of the Japanese committee “Peace to Vietnam.”
- TFR 236-2-3 Undated document entitled “Short Notes of the Unofficial Conversation with the member of the Japanese Committee Peace to Vietnam, Konaka. Konaka arrived in Moscow on 26 March 1968 after participating in a convention in Stockholm with representatives of international and national organizations that are speaking out for an end to aggression in Vietnam. The Chairman of the Peace to Vietnam Committee, Oda Makoto, was unable to attend the convention, or come to Moscow because of the recent death of his Mother. Oda, is however, planning to go to Moscow in April 1968. Konaka came to Moscow to iron out “technical problems” involving the moving of US deserters from Japan. In official discussions, Konaka is going to ask for guidance as to what to do with the 11 US deserters already in Japan. Wants a suggestion as to what country to send them to, keeping in mind that any country that is served by water navigation can be used. Prior to coming to Moscow, Konaka also discussed this issue in Sweden and France but the issue is still unresolved. Konaka also said that the Japanese peace movement wants to establish closer ties with the Soviet peace movement.
- TFR 240-1 Undated cover letter for the rest of this TFR 240 Material. Addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and unsigned. This page is heavily sanitized. States that in accordance with the assignment given on 17 September 1970, material is being forwarded for use in the talks with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam party-government delegation.
- TFR 240-2 Page 5 of the material forwarded by TFR 240-1 that, again is heavily sanitized. States that since February 1965, 3,357 American aircraft were shot down by the PVO and Air Force of the Vietnamese People’s Army. Of these, 898 were shot down by SAMs, 259 by fighter aviation, and 2,200 by AAA.
- TFR 258-1-7 A 7 page document containing the names, birth years, periods of service, and home address of 76 people living in the territory of the Republic of Belarus’, who served in Vietnam from 1961-1974.

APPENDIX B

Interviews

4 November 1992. **Pavel Ponomaryov**, former Soviet Air Force Navigator with the 708th Military Aviation Regiment, stationed at Vinh, North Vietnam from January to December 1962.

Ponomaryev's unit had two missions: to drop ammunition and supplies into the Van Viyeng Valley (Plain of Jars) in Laos, and to ferry North Vietnamese personnel supplies from Vinh to an airstrip called Tchepone, inside Laos on the border of South Vietnam. Ponomaryov recalled frequently seeing American pilots while flying over the Plain of Jars. Sometimes they would communicate over the radio, and sometimes they would buzz him and laugh. Ponomaryov felt that the relationship was friendly. He mentioned that after the three warring Princes signed a peace agreement on 9 November 1962, he often saw Americans on the same airfield in Vientiane with the Russians.

Ponomaryov said that in 1962, after the monsoon season (possibly August or September), he and a pilot named Aleksandr Leonidovich Matkin picked up a Caucasian male, from Tchepone and flew the man to Vinh, where he reportedly was put on a North Vietnamese aircraft bound for Hanoi, Ponomaryov related that he and Matkin returned to the same location a few days later to pick-up a second Caucasian male and delivered him to Vinh also. Ponomaryov had minimal contact with his passengers since both were escorted by Vietnamese who did not permit any communication between the passengers and the Soviets. Ponomaryov described the first individual as six feet tall, with blond or light-colored hair, about 28 years old, and very good looking. He described the second individual as somewhat shorter than the first prisoner and about the same age. Neither man showed any evidence of wounds or identifying marks. They wore "regular" shoes, shirts draped outside their trousers, and no military insignia. Ponomaryov was told by local Vietnamese soldiers that the Caucasians were American pilots.

18 November 1992. **Mikhail Georgyevich Lesin**, former Soviet Air Force Captain , served as an aircraft Commander on Il-2s, based at Vinh, Vietnam from February to November 1962.

Lesin did not remember the flights described by Ponomaryov. The only POW-related information he recalled is that in 1962, he delivered one group of U.S. POWs from the Plain of Jars to U.S. control at Vientiane. He said there were either three or six U.S. POWs. He remembered that the POWs were escorted by Vietnamese guards, and that the aircraft had Laotian markings. Lesin claimed not to have heard of any other POWs being flown on Soviet aircraft.

25 November 1992. **Petr Konstantinovich Chivkunov**, former Colonel, and Deputy Commander of the 708th Military Transport Aviation Regiment, stationed in North Vietnam from January to December 1962.

Chivkunov stated that his unit often flew uniformed North Vietnamese soldiers as well as European-looking men who spoke French, and some who even spoke English. All the “Europeans” wore civilian clothes. Chivkunov saw many European-looking men in Hanoi and noted that French planes often flew from Bangkok, Thailand to Hanoi. Chivkunov denied any personal contact with, or knowledge of, any American POWs. He was adamant that no American pilots were transported north during his tour.

24 January 1995. **Ivan Makarovich Romanenko**, former Soviet ADA, served in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969 and had no substantive information about American POW/MIAs.

25 January 1995. **Yevgeniy Timofeyevich Sidorov**, former Soviet instructor of air defense techniques, served in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969 and was stationed in Son Tay, but had no information on American POW/MIAs.

25 January 1995. **Aleksandr Semyenovich Mushenko**, former Soviet Army Colonel, served in Vietnam from 1954 to 1966 as an ADA.

The U.S. previously interviewed Mushenko in May 1994, at that time he stated that he once saw an American POW but from a great distance. [However, General Cherginets provided the U.S. with a document that stated that Mushenko had repeated meetings with U.S. POWs.] During the interview he stated that his service in Vietnam was many years ago and that he could no longer remember any meetings with U.S. POWs.

26 January 1995. **Nazyat Salikhovich Mingazov**, former Soviet ADA Group Commander, served in Vietnam from September 1969 through August 1970. Mingazov was based in Quang Binh Province, and had no information on American POW/MIAs.

27 January 1995. **Viktor Vasilyevich Pronin**, former Soviet Army Lieutenant Colonel, served in Vietnam from August 1972 through January 1973 as an ADA.

Pronin was assigned to the Hanoi area, and had no information on American POW/MIAs. However, Pronin allowed the U.S. to make copies of a Vietnamese newspaper that had articles concerning shoot downs of U.S. aircraft and which contained the pictures of nine U.S. POWs. He additionally allowed the U.S. to make copies of several pictures he took of a B-52 crash site, and part of a flight suit.

28 January 1995. **Anatoliy Panteleyevich Odinet**s, former Soviet Army Colonel, served in Vietnam as a Senior ADA from April 1966 to April 1967.

During the second interview by the U.S., Odinet explained that during his time in Vietnam he was the only ADA who had permission from both the Soviets and the Vietnamese to take official pictures of downed aircraft and other items of military significance. Odinet provided the U.S. with hundreds of negatives showing U.S. crash sites, tail numbers, equipment data plates. Odinet stated that many of these pictures were included in secret books under the title “The Experience of War in Vietnam” (“Opyt Voiny Vo Vietname”), “Combating Maneuverable Flying Targets” (“Borba Protiv Maneviruyushchikh Letayushchikh Obyektov”), and “Combating the Shrike Missile” (“Borba Protiv Rakety Shrike”).

30 January 1995. **Nikolay Arsenyevich Blinkov**, former Soviet Army Colonel, commanded a group of Soviet ADA in Vietnam from September 1967 through September 1968.

In Haiphong in late January or early February 1968, Blinkov stated that he saw the coffin of a dead U.S. flyer who had been piloting an A-7 or A-4. Blinkov stated that the Vietnamese told him that this American was a lieutenant born in 1941, who had sustained stomach wounds during the shootdown of his aircraft and had ejected at about 300 meters. Additionally, Blinkov related that he had heard that

the commander and his deputy of the U.S. aviation group “Karat”, based in Thailand, were shot down and captured, and that their pictures were in Vietnamese newspapers at the end of 1967 or early 1968. Blinkov further stated that he had met military specialists from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba who were providing assistance to the North Vietnamese. Blinkov added that the Vietnamese always wrote down and recorded all pertinent information on every plane they shot down.

10 March 1995. **Yevgeney Petrovich Sulyga**, author of the 28 February 1995 article in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* concerning the Commission’s work in Minsk.

Sulyga clarified certain details of the article. Sulyga said that the name “Alexander Sergeyev” was fictitious, created to protect the privacy of the individual who found the ID card of the downed U.S. flyer mentioned in the article. Additionally, Sulyga clarified that the words “Viet Cong” in his article were understood by him to mean all soldiers serving under Ho Chi Minh. Sulyga stressed that he had no information regarding Soviet advisors serving in South Vietnam.

10 March 1995. **Anatoliy Panteleyevich Odinets**, former Soviet Army Colonel, served in Vietnam as a Senior ADA from April 1966 to April 1967.

During the third interview with Odinets, he clarified some previous points of discussion with the U.S. and gave explanations pertaining to some of the photos which he had previously provided. Additionally, Odinets provided the U.S. with dozens of new negatives from his service in Vietnam, which he had located in his personal notes since he last met with the U.S. in January 1995. Odinets stated that he was given permission by the North Vietnamese to take photos of ADA sites, and any pictures of downed aircraft were taken at his own risk.

Odinets provided the following additional information about his service in Vietnam: The Military attaché to Vietnam was General-Major Alexander Lebedev. There were KGB representatives present in military units, but they were assigned to a unit only for its first six months in country. The GRU had no independent resident agents in Vietnam, since they were a part of the military structure. Representatives of the GRU conducted their intelligence gathering work as a routine part of military operations in Vietnam. Odinets was a bit surprised when the U.S. mentioned Col Razuvayev, who was in charge of a

specialized team or “Spetsgruppa” in Vietnam, which was tasked with the collection of captured enemy equipment and its subsequent transport to the USSR. Razuvayev, through documents acquired earlier by the U.S., consistently attempted to acquire from the North Vietnamese, interrogation protocols of downed U.S. fliers. Odinets said that Razuvayev worked for the “Byuro Vneshnikh Snoshenii” and was indeed in the business of sending captured equipment to the USSR. Odinets said that Razuvayev’s group would at times, pack up entire aircraft for transport by train to the Soviet Union - Odinets did not know the destination of the equipment. As an ADA officer, Odinets did not have a high opinion of Razuvayev’s work, calling it “thievery”, as opposed to good, clean intelligence work. He opined that Razuvayev reported to ADA (PVO) HQ in Moscow and that he was himself an ADA officer. Odinets does not know what happened to Razuvayev or the Spetsgruppa, nor does he know Razuvayev’s current whereabouts. Odinets recalled that there were two such Spetsgruppa at work in Hanoi, the second of which was involved in SIGINT operations in North Vietnam, and he mentioned the name “Tachan”. Odinets could give no further information about either Spetsgruppa.

Odinets also disclosed that there were five POW camps in North Vietnam that were exclusively for fliers. He does not know the camps locations and claimed, “No one knew”. He said however, that all five of the POW camps were located north of Hanoi, approximately 50 km behind the Red River, on the territory that extends towards the border with China. When asked if Soviet advisors ever had the opportunity to have contact with American POWs, he answered in the negative. Odinets revealed the actual regimental numerical designations of the North Vietnamese ADA regiments as the: 236th(1), 238th(2), 285th(3), 274th(4), 257th(5), 275th(6), 278th(7), 263rd(8), 267th(9), and 261st(10) - Odinets stated that the numbers in parentheses are code numbers for the corresponding regiments.

12 March 1995. Yevgeniy Timofeyevich Sidorov, former Soviet instructor of air defense techniques, served at Son Tay in Vietnam from November 1968 to October 1969. Sidorov had nothing new to add to his previous interview conducted in January 1995.

12 March 1995. Viktor Vasiliyevich Pronin, former Soviet Army Lieutenant Colonel, served as an ADA in Vietnam from August 1972 to January 1973.

During the second interview Pronin provided a last name (Timoshenko) of a lead (Mikhail Kuzmich), which he had provided during his first interview in January 1995.

12 March 1995. Grigory Mikhaylovich Deykun, former Soviet ADA, served in Vietnam from February - May 1972.

Follow-up from 7 July 1994 interview, Deykun provided the full name of a lead for which he had previously had only partial information. Mikhail Adamovich Simonov served in Vietnam with Deykun, the U.S. has made numerous unsuccessful attempts to locate Simonov during previous trips to Minsk. Deykun showed the U.S. souvenirs which he took from a downed U.S. F-105 in the Quang Tri province of North Vietnam. These souvenirs are 2 “Sharikovye Fugasy” or bomb pieces. Deykun had no information about the pilot of this downed F-105. Additionally, Deykun showed the U.S. an official document signed by General Maksimenko, thanking Deykun for his service in Vietnam. Deykun also stated that he had heard that the Soviets shipped a U.S. F-4 Phantom, in good condition, from North Vietnam to a Moscow aviation factory.

13 March 1995. Nazyat Salikhonovich Mingazov, former Soviet Army Colonel commanded a group of ADA in Vietnam from September 1969 - August 1970. Follow-up interview, Mingazov had no new information of substance for the U.S.

14 March 1995. Viktor Mikhailovich Odintsov, former Soviet Army Colonel, served in Vietnam as an ADA from October 1972 to October 1973.

Odintsov was based in Hanoi and traveled all over North Vietnam and even visited Laos. Odintsov showed the U.S. the original pictures he had taken in Hanoi sometime between December 1972 and January 1973 of several U.S. POWs at a news conference. He said that he had heard the names of these U.S. POWs but was unable to remember them. Upon closer inspection, in one of the pictures of a captured U.S. flyer, the flyer’s name-tag is visible and can be partially read. The U.S. convinced him to turn over this picture, which he did. Odintsov claimed that he did not have any meetings with U.S. POWs, and that he only saw them from a distance at the press conference. In addition, there were several other cases, apparently not related to the above-mentioned POWs, where

Odintsov had visited crash sites of downed American aircraft. He stated that he had visited two separate places on the outskirts of Hanoi where B-52 bombers had crashed. In addition, he visited the crash site of an F-106 in the same area. Odintsov further related that a Soviet television correspondent, last name of Kamenev-Almazov, possibly of Moscow (NFI), had said that he had seen the body of a dead U.S. flyer from a downed B-52 in Hanoi in December 1972. According to Odintsov, the Vietnamese claimed to have shot down 32 B-52 bombers during attacks on Vietnam.

*14 March 1995. **Valentin Mikhailovich Kozubovsky**, former Soviet Colonel, served in Vietnam from August 1973 to August 1974 as an instructor at the Military Institute in Son Tay.*

Kozubovskiy related that the Vietnamese published a military newspaper which he thinks was called “Star”. Kozubovskiy will attempt to locate this newspaper, in which he claims are published the photographs of “around 50” U.S. POWs in Vietnam, in his personal belongings.

*15 March 1995. **Nikolay Arsenyevich Blinkov**, former Soviet ADA, served in North Vietnam from September 1967 - September 1968.*

Follow-up interview. Blinkov had previously provided the U.S. information on an A-4 or A-7 aircraft downed in late January or early February 1968, and said that he had personally seen the coffin containing the body of the flier.

*16 March 1995. **Carole Crenshaw**, the American Ambassadors secretary in Minsk, and George Fitzgerald, the spouse of the Political Officer in Minsk.*

Crenshaw and Fitzgerald both related that they had visited the KGB museum in Vilnius, Lithuania on 15 March 1995. During the visit, their tour guide revealed that he had served over ten years as a prisoner in the Gulags and that “four American Officers had been with me in one of the camps”. The tour guide revealed neither the location of the camps nor the names of the Americans.

*16 March 1995. **Mikhail Kuzmich Timoshenko**, former Soviet ADA for equipment repair, served around Hanoi, North Vietnam from March 1971 to February 1972.*

Timoshenko related that on three occasions he saw U.S. F-4 Phantoms get shot down around Hanoi near “Phu Lo” in June or July 1971. Timoshenko said that on two of these occasions he saw,

from a distance, the fliers eject. Timoshenko never heard the names or any other information about these downed flyers. Timoshenko further related that he has pictures of downed U.S. aircraft in Vietnam, but was unable to locate these pictures prior to the interview. Timoshenko said he would continue searching for the pictures.

*17 March 1995. **Stanislav Ivanovich Sorokin**, former Chief Soviet KGB representative to Hanoi, North Vietnam from 1974 to 1979.*

Sorokin had a good understanding of the purpose of the meeting, and said that he had once meet with U.S. Congressmen to discuss the issue of American POW/MIAs. While in Vietnam he provided the liaison between the leadership of the Soviet and North Vietnamese KGB's, and at times also represented the Soviet MVD since they had no representative there. He was housed and worked in downtown Hanoi near a number of foreign embassies. He was not a witness to any specific incidents of U.S. losses. He had of course heard of incidents of losses, and had witnesses first hand the destruction resulting from American bombings. He also denied ever getting information on specific losses, but said it could have been possible; and of course he had read about specific incidents in newspapers. Sorokin stated that he had no requests to the Vietnamese for information on specific losses, nor any procedures for getting that information. He was not interested in it. His primary interests were in the equipment on U.S. aircraft and weaponry. He would get letters from Moscow on specific items of interest to the Soviets, and he would pass on these interests to the Deputy Minister for Technology. However, there was no cooperation from the Vietnamese side. Sorokin was astonished by the uncooperative attitude of the Vietnamese. Vietnamese officials would on the surface treat him very well smiles and politeness, but would not follow through on the Soviet requests. Sorokin replied in the affirmative when asked if there was a Soviet interest in meeting American POWs. As an intelligence officer, there would be a real interest, since Americans were the number one enemy of the Soviet Union. Sorokin said he tried to raise this issue with the Vietnamese, but all he got were smiles, affirmative head nodding, and positive verbal responses. However, he stated that after he got on station, he read a report written by his predecessor that in 1973 or 1974, the Vietnamese had shown his predecessor an American POW in building where he and his Vietnamese counterparts would have meetings. However,

it was only a one time event. Sorokin did not know the name of the POW. When asked if Sorokin had any specific instructions from headquarters not to meet with American POWs, he replied in the negative, and stated that it would have been useful, but the Vietnamese did not permit it. According to Sorokin, no other Soviet personnel met with American POWs, because he would have known about it, since the requests and meetings would have had to go through him. Sorokin said he realized that it was useless to keep asking for access to American POWs, due to Vietnamese rejections. In regard to Soviets in other countries like Laos having access to American POWs, Sorokin stated that he was not possession of any information on that topic, but thought that it was probably no different in Laos, because the Lao, and the rules/restrictions would have probably been the same. Sorokin was asked if he had a mission to collect information on American POWs, such as name, DOB, or any other statistical data. He replied that he would have if it had been possible to get it. But since there was no opportunity to get it - the Vietnamese attitude - he did not have that as a mission. If he had obtained information, he would have sent it off to headquarters, who would have advised him if it was useful or required. Regarding the receipt of assessment of the Vietnamese interrogation reports of American POWs, Sorokin said he received no such assessments, because of the relationship with the Vietnamese. He again reiterated the unsuccessful attempts by the Soviets to get equipment, and the way in which the Vietnamese kept putting the Soviets off. They would not reject the Soviet requests in words, but would just take no action. Sorokin believes that American POWs would not have been transferred to China because the Chinese would not have deemed this advantageous in the long run to their future relationship with the U.S. They knew that sooner or later, the relationship would get better. Nor does he believe any American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union, since he would have known about it. He qualified that response by saying it is difficult for anyone to say 100% to something, but he does not think that Americans were transferred. Sorokin was asked if he obtained any information on American POWs from Soviet Advisors who were serving in Vietnam, and replied that he could have had conversations with advisors related to that topic, but he had no information from them. Sorokin would not provide any names of personnel the U.S. could follow-up with, citing a law that prohibits him from disclosing names.

27 March 1995. Zdislovas Juchnevicius, Russian language teacher in Saigon from 1985 to 1989.

Follow-up to the 1993 interview conducted by a Consular Officer at the American Embassy, Vilnius, Lithuania. Juchnevicius related that during his time in Vietnam, the local Vietnamese had told him about an American officer who had refused to leave Vietnam at the end of the war. He was able to recall that the Officer's name was "Bernard" and that the Vietnamese called him "Ben". Juchnevicius never saw this man, he and his wife only heard about him. He related that this American lived in the Mekong Delta, that he was known locally for being mentally unbalanced and was probably a deserter, that his family (wife) was in America, that he was a Caucasian, had become a Buddhist, and that he wore glasses. Juchnevicius further related that this American died in 1985 and was buried in a coffin wearing a white robe, in a village called "Kyi Long" or "Cuu Long." Juchnevicius cautioned that "Ben" was buried in accordance with Buddhist custom and that he may have been buried under a Vietnamese name. Juchnevicius never heard this person's last name. Additionally, he related that after the end of the war, Soviet specialists lived in the San-San Hotel in Saigon and that there were approximately 200 Soviet military specialists and 3000 civilian specialists in Vietnam at any one time in the late eighties.

28 March 1995. Vladas Burbulis, TASS correspondent in Vietnam from 1971 to 1975 and from 1985 to 1989.

Burbulis visited Laos periodically, and in 1978 published a book about Vietnam called: "Between the Red River and the Mekong". Burbulis gave the U.S. the holdings in his personal archive concerning his work in Vietnam. This archive consists of a large number of pictures of various Vietnamese personalities, places, and events to include some military events such as parades; copies of articles Burbulis had written about Vietnam; and a large number of negatives. Burbulis stated that there should be negatives from pictures he took at the crash site of a U.S.

B-52 on 30 December 1972. Burbulis related that under Soviet rule, when TASS assigned correspondents to a country, two were usually assigned and that one of them was a real journalist and that the other one was actually KGB or GRU. As a result of this, Burbulis was able to recall that several of his colleagues in Vietnam were actually KGB or GRU. Burbulis provided a picture of Oleg Oleynik, possibly in Moscow working for the Russian Information Agency, who was actually a GRU

Major (now retired) while in Vietnam. Burbulis said that Oleynik worked for two years in Paris as a journalist after Vietnam. Burbulis related that Oleynik loved to drink and would boast while drinking. According to Burbulis, Oleynik once stated that there was an agreement between the USSR and Vietnam that whenever a plane was shot down and prisoners taken, that first the Vietnamese would interrogate the prisoners, then the Vietnamese and KGB/GRU would interrogate them together, then the KGB/GRU would interrogate them alone. Burbulis related that Oleynik claimed that he went to the places where downed or dead fliers were being held and that he interrogated them. Burbulis stated that the KGB/GRU took pictures of downed U.S. aircraft and bodies of U.S. fliers. He is 100% sure that this information is held in KGB/GRU archives in Moscow, although he clarified this by saying that this was his “personal opinion.” Burbulis also believes that American POWs from Vietnam were taken to the USSR. He bases this statement on the fact that a TASS correspondent, Volodya Blazhenkov, who was actually a KGB LtCol, said that this had taken place. Burbulis further related that while in Laos he had been told that in May 1973, the Pathet Lao shot down a F-4 Phantom. One flier perished and one ejected. The one who ejected was a Caucasian named George, who “stayed voluntarily and helped the Pathet Lao.” Burbulis never heard this flier’s last name.

5 May 1995. **Aleksey Overchuk**, newspaper reporter, in April 1995, Overchuk authored and published an article in Moskovsky Komsomolets on the Soviet Air Defense Artillery effort and presence in Vietnam.

Overchuk was not willing to reveal his sources for the article but did pass onto the U.S. a copy of a picture of a remnant from a downed U.S. fighter which was shot down near Hanoi in 1967. Overchuk stated that the Moscow regional air defense regiments sent large numbers of individuals to serve tours in Vietnam. According to Overchuk, the information in the article was second hand information.

15 May 1995. **Valentin Mikhailovich Kozubovsky**, former Soviet Colonel, served in Vietnam from August 1973 to August 1974 as an instructor at the Military Institute in Son Tay.

Follow-up from March 1995 interview during which Kozubovsky claimed that he had a Vietnamese newspaper with pictures of approximately 50 U.S. POWs. Kozubovsky had been unable

to find this newspaper and had no new information for the U.S. Kozubovsky said he would continue searching for the newspaper. The U.S. to follow-up.

15 May 1995. **Vladimir Pavolich Belozub**, served in Vietnam from August 1970 to August 1971 in Son Tay. Belozub had no substantive information concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel.

15 May 1995. **Georgiy Semenovich Nominat**, former Soviet LtCol., served in Vietnam from April to November 1966 as an ADA. Follow-up from June 1994 interview. Nominat had no new information of substance for the U.S.

16 May 1995. **Diogen Nikolayevich Ivanov**, served in Vietnam in 1966. Ivanov was a very reluctant interviewee and would not answer most questions. Ivanov claimed that he had no knowledge concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel.

16 May 1995. **Grigoriy Mikhaylovich Deykun**, former Soviet Army member, served in Vietnam from February to May 1972. Follow-up from July 1994 interview. Deykun had no new information for the U.S.

18 May 1995. **Georgiy Mikhailovich Govorko**, former Soviet Army LtCol., served as an ADA in North Vietnam from March - September 1966.

Govorko stated that on one occasion he had seen 3 U.S. POWs at a distance as Vietnamese villagers were abusing them. Govorko had no additional information about this incident and never heard the names of these POWs. Govorko heard rumors that occasionally Vietnamese villagers killed American flyers who fell into their hands. Govorko additionally heard that an intact U.S. A-4D was shipped to Moscow after it had landed undamaged after the pilot had ejected. Govorko claimed to have a data plate from a U.S. airplane downed in Vietnam. He said he would search through his belongings to locate any possible items of interest to the U.S.

18 May 1995. **Lev Nikolayevich Markov**, former Soviet Army Colonel, served at Son Tay, North Vietnam as a ADA from September 1971 to August 1972.

Markov heard from a Vietnamese Captain that groups of U.S. POWs were moved to different locations every night to avoid U.S. rescue attempts. Markov says that the Russians were not allowed to

speak to U.S. POWs, but thinks the Chinese were, since the Vietnamese had better relations with the Chinese. Markov related that he knew 2 Soviet officers who were killed by U.S. bombs. Markov never saw any U.S. POWs nor did he have any substantive information about them.

18 May 1995. Mikhail Adamovich Simonov, served as an ADA in North Vietnam from April 1967 - April 1968. Follow-up from 15 March 1995 interview. Simonov provided 2 pictures of a U.S. F-105 shot down on 1 August 1967.

18 May 1995. Mikhail Kuzmich Timoshenko, former Soviet ADA for equipment repair, served around Hanoi, North Vietnam from March 1971 to February 1972.

Follow-up from 16 March 1995 interview. Timoshenko had located some of his pictures from his service in Vietnam and showed the U.S. 4 pictures of unidentifiable wreckage from a U.S. B-52 aircraft downed in 1971 or 1972. These pictures showed nothing of significance.

19 May 1995. Nikolay Arsenyevich Blinkov, former Soviet Army Colonel, commanded a group of Soviet ADA in Vietnam from September 1967 to September 1968.

Follow-up from January and March 1995 interviews. During the 30 January 1995 interview, Blinkov stated that he had seen the coffin of a dead U.S. flyer whose A-7 or A-4 had been shot down near Hanoi in late January or early February 1968. Blinkov related that the Vietnamese told him that the flyer was a Lieutenant, born in 1941, who was shot in the stomach. Today, Blinkov stated that he never saw the body and that he never heard the flyer's name. Additionally, Blinkov showed the U.S. his photo album from Vietnam with approximately 100 pictures of Vietnam. While interesting, these pictures were of no significance to the U.S., except the pictures of Blinkov's fellow Soviet advisors.

*19 May 1995. Anatoliy Panteleyevich Odinet*s, former Soviet Army Colonel, served in Vietnam as a Senior ADA from April 1966 to April 1967. During the fourth interview with Odinet he had no substantive information concerning U.S. POW/MIAs.

20 May 1995. Anatoliy Ivanovich Gutsalyuk, former Soviet ADA - refused to answer almost all questions and claimed that he had no information at all that would be of interest to the U.S. concerning U.S. POW/MIAs.

22 May 1995. **Vladimir Aleksandrovich Krupnov**, former Soviet ADA, served in Vietnam from September 1966 to December 1967.

Krupnov never saw any U.S. POWs in Vietnam and claimed to have only heard about them in general. Krupnov gave the U.S. a Vietnamese Newspaper dated 7 May 1967 that contained pictures of 3 U.S. flyers supposedly shot down on 5 May 1971. This newspaper will be forwarded to JCSD analyst for translation and analysis.

23 May 1995. **Aleksey Gavrilovich Khokhlov**, is writing a book about the history of the Belorussian armed forces and will include a chapter about its participation in local wars such as Vietnam.

Khokhlov was already aware of the work that the U.S. has been doing in Belarus. He stated that all the Belorussian Vietnam veterans that he has talked with “have already been contacted by you” and at the present time he has not collected any material that would be of interest to the U.S. The U.S. replied that it would be in our mutual interest to stay in touch and Khokhlov agreed to being contacted in the future.

23 May 1995. Leonid Ivanovich Fedyukovich, a Belorussian Afghanistan veteran and a friend of Georgiy Mikhailovich Govorko (see 18 May 1995 interview).

Govorko had gone out of town on vacation but had asked Fedyukovich to show TFR several souvenirs which Govorko had brought back from his time in North Vietnam. The only item of interest to TFR was a data plate from a downed U.S. aircraft.

23 May 1995. **Yury Khangereyevich Totrov**, member of the board and head of the foreign section of The Association of Retired Intelligence Officers of Russia, and a senior consultant with Noukas and Associates, international Investigative and Consulting Services, Moscow.

Totrov provided TFR with a copy of a listing of American aircraft shot down in Vietnam between 1 January 1967 and 17 February 1968, in Russian original and English translation, which had previously been forwarded to DPMO by John Wood a professional colleague in Michigan. The source of the list was retired Colonel Anatoli Ivanovich Melnik of Moscow, who served as a Soviet advisor and a supervisor of Vietnamese air defenses. Totrov also provided a copy of a Kansas City Star

newspaper article of 4 November 1993, telling of a speaking tour he made in America with three other retired KGB foreign intelligence officers. Totrov is very interested in expanding professional contacts with retired western intelligence officers. Totrov related that he worked for General Oleg Kalugin in the seventies and highly respects him. One of Totrov's professional responsibilities at the time was knowledge and tracking of CIA operations and agents. He claimed that Kalugin originally wanted him to go to Vietnam in 1973 to question CIA agent Weaver. But upon returning from vacation, he was surprised to learn that Kalugin had sent Colonel Nechiporenko in his place. Totrov said he did not know the names of the alleged American pilots Nechiporenko interrogated in Hanoi in 1973, but would contact Nechiporenko to see if he might remember their names. Totrov was adamant in his belief that no U.S. servicemembers were transferred to the USSR from Vietnam. Totrov promised to inform other retired Russian foreign intelligence officers of the POW/MIA issue and possibly provide a forum for TFR members to speak before the association some time in early September when the organization reconvenes after summer vacation. Totrov mentioned that he is a friend of General Sergeyevich Leonov, the author of a book entitled "Likholet'ye." General Leonov was formerly head of the KGB analytical directorate circa 1980-1990. TFR will follow up with the General.

23 May 1995. Vladimir Fedorovich Gres, former Soviet Army Captain, served in Vietnam as an ADA from March 1967 to February 1968.

Gres said that in his capacity as an antiaircraft rocket engineer, he had absolutely no personal contact with American POWs. He professes no knowledge of locations of POWs. He professes no knowledge of locations of POW camps or of POWs were processed and interrogated. Gres said that the Vietnamese did not allow Soviets to visit "fresh" crash sites, and did not provide the Soviets with information on shootdown survivors or deaths. Gres stated that at any one time there were approximately twenty-five Soviet pilots in country to train their Vietnamese counterparts, but were forbidden to fly combat missions. Gres and others in the group were encouraged to submit queries on American equipment and technical matters. Such questions, on purely technical matters, were submitted in an ongoing fashion. Every once in a while, they received answers to some of the questions. Gres does not know how or by whom these questions were processed, or how the answers were obtained.

Gres said that he had heard a rumor that in 1966 or 1967 a “Phantom” had been recovered in good condition and had been shipped somewhere in the USSR. Gres recalled that in December 1967, an American Lieutenant Colonel shot down and died in the crash. Gres said that the pilot was the assistant commander of an American air wing and that he had a airline ticket for a return trip to the U.S.

24 May 1995. **Aleksandr Sergeyevich Bukhalovskiy**, former ADA instructor who served in North Vietnam from September 1966 - September 1967.

Bukhalovskiy claims that he never saw any U.S. POWs but that he did see pilots ejecting from U.S. aircraft on 10 or 12 occasions, and that he would check his personal archives to try to find his pictures as well as his notes and diary from Vietnam.

24 May 1995. **Maksim Ivanovich Tsaryuk**, served as an ADA in North Vietnam from July 1965 to September 1965. Tsaryuk had no substantive information concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel.

24 May 1995. **Lev Nikolayevich Markov**, former Soviet ADA instructor at Son Tay, North Vietnam, from September 1971 to August 1972. Follow up from 18 May 1995 interview. Markov had no substantive information concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel.

25 May 1995. **Nikolay Vasilyevich Vasilenko**, served as an ADA, then as the Assistant Commander for Political Matters with the 430th or 460th Bryansk Antiaircraft Rocket Brigade at Nabai Aerodrome from May 1966 to February 1967.

Vasilenko said that the Bryansk regiment was the first such Soviet anti-aircraft training regiment to serve in Vietnam in 1965. Vasilenko professes no knowledge of American POWs whatsoever. He did recall a shootdown of an American aircraft in October 1966 on the China-Laos-Vietnamese border, where his unit was TDY for a few weeks. Two American aircraft, F-104s or F-105s, were shot down by his unit. Four parachutes were seen exiting the two aircraft. Vasilenko saw three captured fliers in passing at the regimental command post. Vasilenko does not recall any details about these POWs, and does not know what happened to them afterwards or where they were taken. Vasilenko said, that there was talk that the fourth parachutist, a second lieutenant, was rumored to have been killed. Vasilenko kept a diary that he donated to Valentin Vasilyevich Nezhelskiy (Dec) who

wrote a dissertation on Political Officers' experiences during the war in Vietnam. Vasilenko opined that the dissertation was completed, and that it is probably still on file at the Lenin Military Political Academy in Moscow.

*1 June 1995. **Aleksey Dmitriyevich Yaroslavtsev**, former Soviet Colonel, served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1968.*

He served as the Commanding Officer of the 263rd Anti-aircraft Rocket Forces Brigade until June 1967, then as the Commanding Officer of the 368th, stationed approximately fifteen km northwest of Hanoi. Yaroslavtsev said that he had no contact with POWs whatsoever. He said that even at the highest levels of the antiaircraft command, there was never any discussion of American POWs, nor was there any direction given pertaining to POWs. He said few if any Soviets ever came into contact with American POWs during the war in Vietnam. Yaroslavtsev recalled that on 24 October 1967, there was a massive raid on Hanoi. The 1st battalion of the 368th regiment shot down one aircraft, which crashed near the airport outside of Hanoi. The pilot ejected prior to the crash.

*1 June 1995. **Valeriy Ivanovich Zubko**, former Soviet Captain, served as an SAM technician and engineer from September 1966 to July 1967.*

Zubko had no information regarding POWs. He said that it was not part of his work in Vietnam. Zubko was surprised that several U.S. aircraft which had crashed relatively intact had not been taken back to the Soviet Union for exploitation. He said the political situation was such that the Soviets had little leeway for independent action. He said the Vietnamese would become upset if even a Soviet advisor left the vicinity of a firing position unannounced.

*14 June 1995. **Vladas Burbulis**, served as a TASS correspondent in Vietnam from 1971 to 1975, and from 1985 to 1989. Follow-up from 28 March 1995 interview.*

Burbulis again restated his earlier remarks that U.S. flyers had been transported to the Soviet Union from Vietnam. Burbulis repeated that he had been told this by Vladimir Blazhenkov, but added that Oleg Oleynik, a GRU Captain who worked as a TASS correspondent while in Vietnam, had also told him that U.S. flyers had been taken to the Soviet Union. Burbulis further related that both

Blazhenkov and Oleynik had told him and other Soviet Journalists that “American flyers had been taken to Moscow to be interrogated about U.S. technology.” When asked how often this had occurred, Burbulis stated that he was not sure, “they did not say”, but Burbulis felt that “it happened more than once.” Burbulis related that U.S. POWs were sent to Moscow to be debriefed on their knowledge of the electronic countermeasure (ECM) capabilities of the U.S. B-52, as well as on their knowledge concerning equipment recovered from downed U.S. aircraft. Additionally, Burbulis stated that it was common knowledge that Soviet officers were actually firing the ADA weapons systems that brought down many U.S. aircraft. Burbulis stated that the U.S. B-52s downed after December 1972 were a direct result of the Soviets having studied U.S. technology in greater detail. Burbulis also related that he had seen and actually spoken to a group of 15 U.S. POWs in Haiphong just prior to their release from captivity in 1973. Burbulis related that “some of the flyers that were at the Haiphong ‘Hilton’ were taken to Moscow.” Burbulis added that “George” was shot down near Sam Neua in Laos and that “George” stayed in Laos “voluntarily” and had married a Laotian woman.

14 June 1995. **Zdislovas Juchnevicius**, Russian language teacher in Saigon from 1985 to 1989. Follow-up from 27 March 1995 interview. Juchnevicius had no new substantive information concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel.

20 June 1995. **Leonid Klichevskiy**, served as a TASS correspondent in North Vietnam from 1966 to 1968.

Klichevskiy claimed to have no knowledge of U.S. POWs except those that he saw at official press conferences in Hanoi. Klichevskiy related that he was able to question U.S. POWs only through an interpreter since he does not speak English. Klichevskiy related that he no longer has any pictures, notes, souvenirs, or film remaining from his time in Vietnam.

28 June 1995. **Valery Mikhailovich Amirov**, Soviet LtCol and Chief of the Combat Department of the Ural Military District weekly newspaper “Ural Military News.” Amirov was the source for a 1991 Yury Rankov article on the alleged transfer of an American POW from Vietnam to the Soviet Union in 1967. Amirov had no new information.

30 June 1995. **Aleksey Mikhaylovich Vasilyev**, served as a Pravda correspondent in Vietnam from February 1967 to January 1969.

Vasilyev is now the director of The Institute of African and Arab Studies for the Russian Academy of Sciences; President of the Center for Arab, African, and Islamic Studies; and a member of the Council for Foreign Policy, Ministry of foreign Affairs, Russian Federation. Vasilyev was able to travel around Vietnam and took pictures at several crash sites of U.S. aircraft. He also saw U.S. POWs, and that he conducted an interview of one U.S. POW. Vasilyev said this interview is included in a book he wrote about his time in Vietnam, "Rockets Over the Lotus Flower" which he provided to JCSD. "The Vietnamese were very good at filtering the POWs into the groups which would help them and those which would not help."

30 June 1995. **Vladimir Vasilyevich Fedorov**, former Soviet Colonel, served in Vietnam as an ADA and commanded an ADA regiment in the late sixties. Fedorov is quite elderly, has no information concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel.

3 July 1995. **Olga Konstantinova Belan**, a journalist for a Moscow weekly, "Sobesednik."

Belan has written several articles concerning POW/MIA issues including the "Golden Parachutes" article in 1993. Belan said she has not worked on the issue for some time but is willing to help in any way she can. She feels that the Russians did everything they could in the past to hide evidence of U.S. POWs. She believes U.S. names were changed to Russian names in the prison system; prison records were destroyed as the U.S. expressed an interest in specific personnel at the time of the disintegration of the USSR; and that those who were aware that POWs were American were killed. Belan also felt that the Russian side of the joint commission is not making a sincere effort. Belan felt there was a reluctance on the part of Russian veterans of Vietnam to discuss the issue. This reluctance made her think that these veterans were "hiding something." Belan had interviewed General Abramov before he passed away. Abramov had been a senior Soviet officer in Vietnam. Belan felt that Abramov was not telling the truth when he said there had been no contact between the Soviets and U.S. POWs.

5 July 1995. **Nikolai Nikolayevich Kolesnik**, former Soviet Sergeant, served as an ADA in Vietnam from July 1965 to March 1966.

Kolesnik is now the chairman of the Union of Veterans of Vietnam, and was the source for an April 1995 newspaper article by Aleksey Overchuk which discusses events from the Vietnam War. Kolesnik did not personally see any U.S. POWs, and his quotes concerning U.S. POWs mentioned in the newspaper article were all related to him by Vietnamese translators. Kolesnik said that in the initial engagements with U.S. aircraft, the rocket warheads were so powerful that aircraft were destroyed by the blast and that the pilots bodies disintegrated. Later they switched to a less powerful warhead so there would be a chance to get POWs. Kolesnik said that on 11 August 1965, the Vietnamese shot down four U.S. A-4D aircraft. According to the Vietnamese, they found some remains of three dead flyers. Three of these planes came down close to Kolesnik's position, the fourth plane crashed some 15-20 kilometers away and the Vietnamese did not find the pilot.

27 July 1995. **Aleksandr Mineyev**, former Soviet war correspondent, stationed in Hanoi, North Vietnam from November 1972 to the mid-seventies.

Mineyev said that from the time he arrived in Hanoi until the end of the war, he attended numerous press conferences at which American POWs were present. He affirmed that he and French APF correspondent, John Jacques Du Sablon, visited two American POWs in their prison cell in December 1972. Mineyev only recalls the last name of one of these Americans as being "Padgett." He also remembers seeing about 30 American POWs in the central Hanoi prison center in early 1973. Mineyev stated that this prison facility was about a ten minute walk from the Russian embassy in Hanoi. Mineyev claims that the Russian Ambassador to North Vietnam, I.S. Shcherbakov, talked with several American POWs during the course of the war. When asked about rumors of possible Americans being left behind in Vietnam, Mineyev replied that he heard such rumors but only from his western colleagues and not from any Russian or Vietnamese sources. Mineyev further claimed he never heard rumors of American POWs being sent to China. He asserted that Vietnamese relations with China deteriorated towards the end of the war. At this time the Vietnamese were playing both the Chinese and Russians against each other. They were, however, more sympathetic toward the Russians who were providing

them with missiles. Mineyev revealed that even though the Russian “special services” had close relations with the North Vietnamese, the latter did not share much information toward the end of the war. When queried on the possibility of American POWs being transported to the Soviet Union, Mineyev replied that “he cannot exclude the possibility of this happening.”

2 August 1995. **Aleksey Mikhaylovich Vasilyev**, served as a Pravda correspondent in Vietnam from February 1967 to January 1969 and wrote a book about his Vietnam experiences called “Rockets Over The Lotus Flower.”

On page 38 Vasilyev writes: “In February 1965 one of the first U.S. jets was brought down in the area. The pilot of the Skyhawk bailed out but his parachute failed. Both the body and the wreckage fell into the sea at a distance of around two kilometers from shore. An order came from Hanoi to recover the wreckage of the aircraft and the body at any cost. The wreckage of the aircraft and the body of the pilot, as well as maps and documents, were intact and unspoiled, and found their way to the surface.” Vasilyev said that the paragraphs about the recovery of the pilot’s body were related to him by Ho Tien Quoc, a fisherman who spent ten days working on the recovery of the plane and the body in the Quang Binh Province. Vasilyev said that Ho Tien Quoc related all this in the presence of Vietnamese government officials so Vasilyev feels that this must have been a government approved version of events since Vasilyev was a foreign journalist. On page 80 Vasilyev writes that on 25 April 1967 he witnessed the shoot down of a U.S. aircraft over Hanoi - he could not remember the type of aircraft and did not see a parachute. On pages 82-83, Vasilyev reports seeing a U.S. aircraft hit by a missile and disintegrating on 19 May 1967. On page 104 Vasilyev writes that at the end of April 1967, he attended a news conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which the Vietnamese planned to show off a recently shot down U.S. aircraft and its captured pilot. When Vasilyev arrived the pilot had died from his injuries but he did manage to see the body of “Larry Weskamp.” On page 150-151, Vasilyev writes about a U.S. pilot who was shot down on 26 April 1967. The pilot bailed out and was in a “dinghy” on the water when the Vietnamese sunk the dinghy with the pilot in it. Vasilyev was unable to recall further details about this incident.

3 August 1995. **Vasiliy Anatoliyevich Taregradskiy**, served as a French and English translator based in Hanoi from December 1960 to January 1962. Taregradskiy had no information concerning U.S. POW/MIA personnel and was unable to provide any new leads.

6 September 1995. **Viktor Vasilyevich Tregubov**, former Sergeant in the Soviet Army, served in Vietnam from 1964 to 1965 in a Soviet ADA Detachment.

Tregubov said that in September 1964 he saw an American POW pilot, with parachute, being escorted by Vietnamese soldiers. He does not remember the exact date or time, save that it was not at night. The American was brought by vehicle to the Russian unit, fed, and given something to drink. He stayed with the unit for 20-30 minutes, was treated correctly, and then taken away. As a Sergeant, Tregubov was not told anything about the prisoner, and did not speak to him, although he said that others in his unit probably did briefly. The American wore a specialized aviator's uniform, but Tregubov did not note his rank. The man seemed tired, but otherwise in good physical health with no wounds. The American appeared to be around 28 years of age, of average build, and was Caucasian. Tregubov said that this was the only American POW he saw. He did hear various rumors about U.S. POWs, but could not confirm any of them, and none pertained to their transfer to Russia. He personally could not see any benefit in the Soviets transferring prisoners out of Vietnam, feeling that their value would have been extremely limited. He said that perhaps specialists from larger plane crews might have had such value, but he doubted it.

10 January 1996. **Timofey Alekseyevich Svityuk**, served as a medic in North Vietnam from 27 May - 4 November 1966.

On one occasion in late October 1966, Svityuk claims he was summoned to the crash site of a U.S. aircraft in Xabac Province, North Vietnam, to administer first aid to two U.S. flyers. Svityuk claims to have arrived at the scene of the crash around 40 minutes after the U.S. plane was shot down. Svityuk was unable to identify the type of aircraft but he was certain that it was "some kind of reconnaissance aircraft since it was shot down at an altitude of around 500-600 meters." Svityuk claims that upon his arrival he checked the pulses of two partially buried U.S. flyers. Their hands and feet were still protruding from the ground while the remaining parts of their bodies were lightly covered

with dirt. Svityuk claims that one flyer was already dead but the other flyer had a weak pulse and was still alive. Svityuk claims that he alerted the Vietnamese to the fact that this flyer was still alive and that “they needed to save him.” However, Svityuk claims that the measures claiming that the “flyer had fired at us after his plane crashed;” and that although he was alive when he made it to the ground “we killed him.” Svityuk claims that these flyers landed in the downed aircraft and did not eject. Svityuk says the U.S. flyers were buried at a distance of about 5 or 6 meters from the downed aircraft. Svityuk says that he never heard the names or ranks of these flyers and was even unable to say if they were white or black since “their faces were covered by dirt and their hands were extremely dirty.” Svityuk says the crash site was near a metal factory called “Than Gu Yen” in the province of Xabac. Svityuk advised that he took the helmet of one of the flyers as a souvenir but the Vietnamese found out, went to his commander, and he was forced to turn the helmet over to the North Vietnamese. Svityuk says the helmet had the name of the flyer written on it. If necessary, Svityuk is willing to return to Vietnam since he believes he could still locate the burial sites of these two flyers.

In August 1966, Svityuk claims that he witnessed the shootdown of a U.S. F-105 in the North Vietnamese province of Xabac. Svityuk claims the pilot ejected and was captured by the Vietnamese. Svityuk further claims the pilot was a white officer, his parachute was red and white, he had blonde hair, and was around 6 feet tall, and looked to be about 25 years old. Svityuk never found out the name, rank or fate of this pilot.

25 January 1996. **Nikolay Prokofyevich Surnov**, LtCol (Ret), served in Hanoi from 25 December 1960 - 3 June 1961, flight navigator and flew missions into Laos to supply equipment to the Pathet Lao.

Surnov related that on 31 December 1960, the Pathet Lao seized a U.S. aircraft, possibly a C-47, that had been abandoned by its crew on the runway somewhere in Laos. Surnov had no information as to the fate of the crew of the plane. After seizure, the plane was flown to Hanoi on 2 January 1961, with Surnov as the navigator and with Sergey Alekseyevich Somov of Moscow as the pilot. Surnov provided a photograph of this aircraft, showing a partial tail number 0-35. The photograph will be forwarded to JCSD. Surnov also provided pictures of Soviet advisors in Laos shown with the founder of the Pathet Lao, Cong Gle. Surnov further provided new contacts who

served in Vietnam: Arefi Grigoriyevich Popov of Vitebsk; Safin (deceased); Ippolit Vasilyevich Kononov, possibly of Moscow; Charkin, possibly of Moscow; Valentin Ivanovich Novikov, possibly of Kiev, Ukraine, who was a translator; Sergey Ivanov of Lyubertsy, Moscow region; Scherbatykh of Lyubertsy Moscow region; Konstantin Dmitriyevich Biryukov of Moscow; Spiridonov of Moscow, a former attaché in Vietnam; Khasan Alikhamovich Yepkhiev (deceased); Andreyev of Moscow, a translator; Leonid Grigoriyevich Gavrilenko of Novokunznetsk; and Krasnyanskiy of Tula. Surnov had no information concerning U.S. POW/MIAs.

28 January 1996. **Boris Petrovich Yegin**, Colonel (Ret), served as an artillery advisor in North Vietnam from December 1971 - November 1972.

Yegin claims to have encountered a downed U.S. pilot in the far northern jungle of North Vietnam in December 1971. Yegin claims that the U.S. pilot's name was "Sidney" and that he was from Kentucky. Yegin claims that "Sidney" was rescued by U.S. forces and since he was alone Yegin did not hinder the rescue effort. Yegin also claims that in May 1972 he observed two U.S. POWs being guarded by a Vietnamese woman.

31 January 1996. **Mikhail Trofimovich Belyakov**, served as a fighter pilot instructor in North Vietnam from April 1966 - November 1966.

Belyakov stated that his mission was to teach the North Vietnamese pilots how to shoot down U.S. aircraft. Belyakov stated that there were Chinese representatives everywhere who hindered their efforts to assist the Vietnamese. Belyakov had no information concerning U.S. POWs.

31 January 1996. **Mikhail Ivanovich Smirnov**, Major (Ret), served as a Soviet Air Defense Instructor in North Vietnam from May - December 1967.

Smirnov saw "around seven" parachutists in the air from U.S. aircraft which had just been shot down. However, he did not know their fates or identities. Smirnov related that he had an acquaintance who was a Soviet geologist who saw a U.S. POW in captivity but he was unable to provide further details about this incident.

APPENDIX C

Summary of Plenary and Vietnam War Working Group Accomplishments

of the USRJC on POW/MIA Affairs:

1st Plenum: Moscow, March 1992. This initial meeting established the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs. Ambassador Toon and General Volkogonov were assigned by their respective Presidents as co-Chairman.

2nd Plenum: Moscow, June 1992. Initial working meeting in Moscow. This meeting consisted of planning and coordination for the future work of the Commission. No specific information on the Vietnam War was passed. Senator Bob Smith provided the Russian side with a list of the U.S. personnel missing in Southeast Asia, and asked that Russian records be reviewed for information on missing American servicemembers.

3rd Plenum: Moscow, September 1992. The Russian side informed the American side that the Russian intelligence services could not find any information that supported the thesis that Americans were transported to the USSR from Vietnam. The SVR stated that Soviet intelligence officers were not permitted access to American prisoners. The GRU stated that they found no evidence of GRU access to American prisoners in Vietnam, and found no interrogation reports from their North Vietnamese counterparts. The GRU reported that they collected aircraft parts and intelligence reports from their North Vietnamese counterparts, but that their relations were poor. GRU contacts and travel in North Vietnam were limited. MFA Officer's Sviridov and Voronin were interviewed. Documents were passed by the Russian side which demonstrated the lack of Soviet autonomy in North Vietnam, and the apparent lack of involvement of Soviet personnel with American POWs.

4th Plenum: Moscow, December 1992. The Russian side made a definitive statement that live American POWs were not being held on the Moscow territory of the former Soviet Union. The Russian side reported on the reluctance by some former MFA officials who served in Vietnam to speak with the Commission.

5th Plenum: Moscow, April 1993. The Russian side made witnesses available from MFA service in North Vietnam and Laos, who described the lack of open communication with counterparts. The American side provided extended briefings to the Russian side regarding efforts to work with the North Vietnamese to resolve cases of loss of Americans in Indochina. The Russians provided documents to amplify the “1205” document, and information about American service members who voluntarily transited the Soviet Union enroute to third countries.

6th Plenum: Moscow, August 1993. The Russian side provided information and documents to clarify issues surrounding the legitimacy of the “1205” document. The American side asked for the 7-volume GRU study of American forces in Vietnam. Both sides discussed the results of an American forensic examination of an F-111 capsule held in a Russian museum display. The results of the interview with Ambassador Vdovin, former ambassador to Laos were shared. Both sides discussed the potential of learning about American combat equipment acquired by Soviet advisors in the hopes that information might be found on the fate of American personnel associated with the equipment.

7th Plenum: Moscow, December 1993. The Russian side reported that they had completed major archival searches in the Presidential Archives and the Center for Preservation of Contemporary Documentation, without new acquisitions on Vietnam POWs. The Russian side provided documents from the 7-volume GRU study of American air power over North Vietnam. The Russian side further described negative results of archival searches conducted by GRU officials, MoD officials, and archivists working in the archives of former-Soviet states. The working groups system was adopted by

the Commission, and Congressman Peterson and Deputy Archivist Kozlov were appointed as co-Chairmen.

8th Plenum: Washington, DC, March 1994. The Russian side made its first official visit to Washington, DC. During the meetings, both sides agreed to focus the working groups efforts around four principal questions:

1. Soviet transfer of American POWs to the USSR
2. Soviet contact with American POWs in Vietnam
3. Soviet knowledge of numbers and names of POWs
4. Soviet information on specific loss incidents

A preliminary analysis was presented of GRU holdings on American aircraft losses over North Vietnam, which showed the limits of what Soviet military personnel knew, and did not know about U.S. losses. Both sides agreed to place more emphasis on witnesses now that efforts in archival searches seem to have diminishing returns (in terms of positive statements on what happened vis-à-vis American prisoners). The Russian side joined American representatives in meeting with family members of missing American servicemembers.

9th Plenum: Moscow, June 1994. The American side reported to the Russian side on interviews conducted with former Soviet servicemembers who served in Vietnam, and who presently reside in Belarus. These interviews demonstrated the potential to gain information on specific cases of loss that occurred in North Vietnam. The GRU presented the U.S. side with additional information on specific cases of loss that occurred in North Vietnam. The American side presented the Russian side with a list of priority interview candidates, those members of the MFA, KGB, GRU, MoD, and CPSU who had the greatest potential ability to provide informed answers to important questions concerning American prisoners.

10th Plenum: Moscow, September 1994. Two senior officers, one of whom served as the September 1994 Chief of Military Technical Assistants in Hanoi, were interviewed by the working group. General Stol'nikov and Colonel Starov stated that prisoners were not transported or contacted by Soviet military personnel. The U.S. side reported the results of the interviews conducted in Belarus, and described information gathered on specific incidents of loss. The Russian side accepted several new proposed lines of investigation in search of more information on missing Americans in Vietnam.

11th Plenum: Washington, DC, December 1994. This was the Russians second official visit to Washington, DC. The American side afforded the Russians an opportunity to tour the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, and joined them in meeting with family members of missing American servicemembers. The U.S. side presented an interim report on the working groups efforts; past, present, and future. The report summarizes the working hypothesis used to guide the investigations into the four major questions regarding possible Russian involvement with American POWs. The American side stressed the need to interview a KGB officer and also declared its readiness to assist the Russian side in finding Russian MIAs. The Russian side suggested that the groups work proceed in two directions, formally - as complimented by the interim report, and proposing that the group present its findings to the scientific and academic communities.

12th Plenum: Moscow, April 1995. The working group discussed and formulated its input for the Commission's report to Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin. Both sides agreed on future lines of investigation designed to advance the preliminary analysis which the group hopes to present to the historical and academic communities. Both sides agreed to write a historical chapter that will be added to the group's comprehensive report.

13th Plenum: Moscow, August 1995. The Russian side presented its “historical input” which included an in-depth analysis of the “1205” report. The American side presented its “historical” input which focused on the nature of the relationship between the Soviet Union and Vietnam during the war. The Russian side provided a list containing the names of Russian translators who served in Vietnam during the years of the war.